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EASTERN FINLAND

Communicating the Image of North Karelia to German market

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19.05.2022

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Markkanen, Marianne: Communicating the Image of North Karelia to German Market

Thesis 73 pages, references 9 pages, appendices 27 pages

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May 2022

Keywords: destination image, marketing communication, communication channels, identity, sustainability, transportation mode

Abstract

The aim of this master's thesis is to increase the knowledge of German tourists as a marketing segment and to clarify, what kind of image they have about North Karelia as a region. There have not been previously studies that focus purely on North Karelia as a traveling destination. The topic will be analyzed from the perspectives of destination identity, destination image and destination communication. The master's thesis was made in collaboration with the local DMO Visit-Karelia

An online survey was posted on two different Facebook groups in February 2022 and in total 209 responses were gathered. The target group for the survey was Germans who are Finland enthusiasts and having previous interest to travel to Finland. The data was analyzed with multiple analysis methods with SPSS and also couple open ended questions were analyzed with ATLAS.ti.

The main findings will enhance North Karelia's local DMO VisitKarelia and local entrepreneurs to target their marketing on the right segments, in right channels and with suitable messages. Also, preferable transportation modes and meaning of sustainability were discovered.

Itä-Suomen Yliopisto, Yhteiskuntatieteiden ja kauppatieteiden tiedekunta

Kauppatieteiden laitos

Matkailun markkinointi ja johtaminen

Markkanen, Marianne: Pohjois-Karjalan markkinointi matkailukohteena saksalaisille matkailijoille

Pro gradu -tutkielma 73 sivua, lähteet 9 sivua, liitteet 27 sivua

Ohjaajat: Raija Komppula, Jarno Suni

Toukokuu 2022

Avainsanat: kohdekuva, markkinointiviestintä, viestintäkanavat, identiteetti, vastuullisuus, matkustusmuoto

Tiivistelmä

Tämän pro gradu -tutkielman päätavoitteena on lisätä tietoutta saksalaisista matkailijoista markkinoinnin kohderyhmänä sekä selvittää, minkälaisia mielikuvia heillä on entuudestaan Pohjois-Karjalasta alueena. Aiemmin ei ole tehty vastaavia tutkimuksia, jotka keskittyisivät puhtaasti Pohjois-Karjalaan matkakohteena. Aihetta analysoidaan matkakoteen identiteetin, kohdekuvan ja matkakoteen viestinnän näkökulmista. Tämä pro gradu -tutkielma on tehty yhteistyössä paikallisen matkailun destinaatio-organisaatio VisitKarelian kanssa.

Verkkokysely postattiin kahteen eri Facebook-ryhmään helmikuussa 2022 ja yhteensä vastauksia kertyi 209. Kyselyn kohderyhmänä olivat saksalaiset, jotka ovat innokkaita Suomi-faneja sekä heillä on jo aiempaa kiinnostusta Suomeen matkakohteena. Tulokset analysoitiin useamman tutkimusmetodin avulla SPSS-ohjelmalla sekä kaksi avointa kysymystä analysoitiin ATLAS.ti-ohjelmalla.

Keskeisimmät tutkimustulokset auttavat sekä Pohjois-Karjalan paikallista matkailun destinaatio-organisaatio VisitKareliaa että paikallisia yrittäjiä kohdentamaan markkinointinsa oikeille kohderyhmiille oikeissa kanavissa sopivia markkinointiviestejä hyödyntäen. Lisäksi mieluisimmat matkustusmuodot sekä vastuullisuuden merkitys kävivät ilmi tuloksista.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background of the study

Since the German-speaking region is the most populated in Europe and has the largest group of travelers visiting destinations in and around Europe (Starosta, Budz & Krutwig, 2018) it is worthwhile to study further. Based on Business Finland's (2021) actions and researches, Germans are very potential market segment in Finland. Although, they are extremely demanding and experienced travelers who are hard to please. Especially, quality of services, sustainability and German language is highly valued among Germans. (Business Finland, 2021) That huge market segment provides lots of possibilities to domestic service providers, but it needs a further understanding to fulfill the expectations and to attract Germans to visit Finland and specifically North Karelia.

Firstly, this topic was chosen based on author's own personal interest in German culture, Germans as a tourist segment and their traveling habits and motivations. Secondly according to Leena Tervakorpi (2021), who is a Europe and Asia Account Manager of North Karelia's destination management organization VisitKarelia, there are gaps in knowledge how to do marketing in German speaking countries and what kind of factors Germans consider while choosing a travel destination. German tourists are a potential and huge market segment in Finland, which is unfortunately not so well-known yet. So, the aim of this master's thesis is to gain more knowledge of German tourists. In the following sections will be more discussion and statistics about Germans as a tourist.

Since COVID-19 has had a negative influence on tourism statistics both in 2020 and 2021, it is worthwhile to take first a look to the overnight statistics of the year 2019. Germans had in total 661 981 overnight stays in Finland. Only Russians were ahead with 820 888 overnight stays. The following nationalities were United Kingdom, Sweden and China. (Statistics Finland, 2019) Table 1 shows more closely both the number of visitors and overnight stays of top ten countries including Finland (see Table 1). In 2019 17 percent of German travelers in Finland stayed in Lakeland area, to which also North Karelia is belonging to. 36 % of travelers' share of overnights was in Helsinki Region, 28 % in Lapland and 19 % Coast and Archipelago (Business Finland, 2019).

Business Finland (2019) discovered that in 2019 41 % of travelers visited Finland in summer, 23 % in winter, 19 % in spring and 17 % in autumn. The highest number of overnights was in July with almost 100 000 travelers. Šegota and Mihalič (2018) founded that Germans are traveling mainly from June to September and prefer other accommodation instead of hotels.

Even in 2021 during the COVID-19 the number of German travelers were the biggest international group with 8 700 overnight stays in Finland in springtime. Germans also had the biggest drop in overnight stays with 75,4 % decrease from March 2020. The second group with 6 700 overnight stays was Estonians and the third was Swedes with 3 100 overnight stays. (Statistics Finland, 2021)

Table 1. Visitor arrivals and overnight stays in Finland in 2019.

Country of Residence	Visitor arrivals in all accommodation establishments	Nights spent in all accommodation establishments
Finland	9 136 439	16 039 663
Russia	387 415	820 888
Germany	313 131	661 981
United Kingdom	220 272	569 294
Sweden	319 823	558 453
China	234 383	384 415
France	119 640	341 747
United States	142 512	309 118
Netherlands	102 374	262 222
Estonia	96 394	243 107

(Source: Accommodation Statistics, Statistics Finland.)

Specific in North Karelia in 2019 there were 529 000 overnight stays from which 71 400 were international ones. In 2020 the numbers were influenced by COVID-19 and due to that the drop was following: altogether 416 000 overnights from which 34 600 were international ones. (Visit-Karelia, 2021) In the table 2 are presented more closely the overnights by different nationalities.

Table 2. International overnights in North Karelia during 2019-2020.

Country	Overnights in 2019	Overnights in 2020
Russia	23 000	8 600
Germany	9 200	6 900
Estonia	2 900	2 600
Sweden	2 700	1 200
France	1 600	1 100

(Source: Pohjois-Karjalan matkailutilastot, VisitKarelia DMO.)

As it shows (see Table 2), Germans are steadily keeping the second place of international overnights in North Karelia. So based on the statistics, it can be said that Germans is one of the significant customer segments both in North Karelia and in Finland and should be researched more closely to understand their traveling habits and motivations.

Of all Germans' holiday trips in 2020, which were plus five days, the market share of Scandinavia (including Norway, Sweden and Finland) was 1,6 %. This rate has been quite stable within the last 10 years. (ReiseAnalyse, 2021b) According to study of ReiseAnalyse (2021b) Germans' interest to travel to Finland has increased from 9,4 % to 11,1 % within two years. Among other Nordic countries the growth rate is significantly the highest with 18 %. However, it is worthwhile to notice that interest to travel to Denmark, Sweden and Norway are still significantly higher than to Finland. In 2021 Denmark is leading with 22,4 %, Sweden is second with 17 % and Norway following on the third place with 16,7 %.

Approximately 0,8 million Germans are purely interested on to travel to Finland. However, there are even 5,8 million Germans who are willing to travel to Scandinavia, meaning all three countries – Norway, Sweden and Finland. (ReiseAnalyse, 2021b) It would be worthwhile to study more their motives, why only 0,8 million tourist want to travel to Finland but even 5,8 million to all Scandinavian countries. What makes Norway and Sweden so special compared to Finland?

Finland is shared in four travel regions – Helsinki Region, Coast and Archipelago, Lakeland and Lapland. North Karelia is a part of a big Lakeland area. ReiseAnalyse (2021b) investigated, which

regions are the most attractive among potential Germans. They found out that all of the regions are rather equal, but Lakeland area and Coast & Archipelago are the most interesting areas to travel with 10,5 % for both of the regions. Helsinki Region is following with 9,5 % of interest and Lapland is the last one with 8,1 %. That fact makes the North Karelia a very potential market area for German tourists and a reasonable market segment to study further and more detailed.

ReiseAnalyse (2021b) also investigated the impact of different age groups and their intentions to travel to Finland. In 2021 14 % of 14-29 years old Germans were interest traveling to Finland when simultaneously from 30-49 years old 11 % and from 50-69 years old 12 % had interest towards Finland. From the age group 70+ only 5 % was interested to travel to Finland. These results shows that especially younger and middle aged travelers are significantly potential travel groups and worth to investigate further. Does age for instance have impact on destination choice and attributes what they are seeking for?

1.2 Objectives and research questions

The aim of this master's thesis was to increase knowledge of German tourists as a marketing segment. According to Karl, Reintinger and Schmude (2015) a growing trend among German tourists is increasing number of holidays per year. They also suggested that there is a need for a further investigations of the following topics: type of holiday, travel motive, travel season, length of stay, travel companion and mode of transport. In this study, the focus was on the question, how to communicate the image of North Karelia to German tourists. That topic was studied further with helping sub questions, which can be seen below. In addition, the transportation mode was studied. This topic was chosen firstly based on author's own interest on German culture. Secondly, results will provide useful information both for the local DMO VisitKarelia and entrepreneurs in North Karelia.

This study was a quantitative study, and the research questions were following:

- 1) How to communicate the image of North Karelia to German tourists?

- a. Which channels are the most important for German tourists when choosing a destination?
- b. What German tourists know about North Karelia as a region?
- c. How attractive German tourists find North Karelia?
- d. What is the meaning of sustainability when choosing a destination?

2) Which transportation mode German tourists are favoring while traveling?

Based on the research results, the local DMO could improve accessibility of the area in collaboration with other stakeholders. At this moment accessibility is a big question in North Karelia. Due to the scarce supply of public transportation, accessibility of different attractions and locations might be difficult for tourists. Therefore, it is important to gain knowledge, which mode of transportation Germans are favoring to have better opportunities to enhance local and national transportation options. In addition, both entrepreneurs and DMO could enhance marketing and responsible communication. That means targeting to German tourists right marketing channels and providing information in preferable language.

Especially for entrepreneurs it is beneficial to understand German tourists better as a marketing segment. Then they can target marketing into right social media or traditional channels and provide useful information in applicable language. When there is better understanding of Germans preferences, what they are seeking for their holiday, it is easier to provide services for them.

Based on study of Šegota and Mihalič (2018), German tourists show interest in art, gastronomy culture and heritage. All of these factors are highly applicable also in North Karelia. Of course, even the results would reveal beneficial information it also requires lots of resources and skills to make concrete actions and to fulfill expectations.

German tourists were studied in Sweden to find out how combination of information channels works on them. The results revealed that they are loyal to their information channels and dismiss too much of information. Germans use both analogue and digital channels. The usual way is to search first for general information from Google and destination organizations. (Zillinger,

2020a) It is beneficial to find out, which are the most used channels and what kind of information they are seeking for.

The purpose of this study was to also find out the meaning of sustainability and responsible communication among German tourists. Sustainability is a big growing trend nowadays and according to Gerdt, Wagner and Schewe (2019) Germans are rather highly interested in the ecological and social consequences of their travels. Even 31 % of Germans considered the ecological sustainability to be important during the holidays. Despite that they are not expressing this interest for instance in their online reviews of hotels. (Gerdt et. al, 2019) This is an interesting finding and need further investigations, why ecological sustainability is so important and what are they really expecting of their holiday.

This topic was not studied earlier in North Karelia from this perspective. Also, there have not been so deeply analyzed studies related to Germans in this region. VisitKarelia made a study together with Nordic Marketing in summer 2021, where the interests and motivations of Germans and other DACH-markets were discovered. The study was not only focused on North Karelia but to Lakeland area. The main findings concerned accommodation types, traveling type, transportation mode and traveler itself whether they are individual or group travelers. (DMO VisitKarelia, 2021) The purpose of this study was to deepen these results and discover more details to enhance marketing to German market.

The structure of this paper is following: first the literature review of the main topics and key concepts will be presented. Then methodology of data collection and analysis will be discussed. After that the main findings will be presented and discussed further. Managerial and theoretical implications and evaluation of the study come after. Also, the suggestions for future studies will be bring forth. In the end of this master's thesis is attached the original survey in German and with English translations. Also, the open ended questions in their original form can be found from the end of the paper.

1.3 Key concepts

Destination competitiveness is a factor which is attracting customers, provides memorable and multidimensional experiences, benefits both companies and local residents and acts in sustainable way. Key determinants are good infrastructure, natural and cultural resources, tourism governance and general business environment. (Ivanov & Ivanova, 2016)

Destination images have a strong impact on destination choice because tourism destinations are intangible and tourists do not have much previous knowledge or experiences about the destination (Kim & Perdue, 2011; Tasci & Gartner, 2007). In this master's thesis destination image will be examined further from two different categories, which are destination identity and destination attributes.

Destination identity consists of different components like destination culture, destination structure and destination communication. Identity is the core to build a brand for a destination (Saraniemi, 2009) and developing a destination identity is a significant tool especially for local destination marketing organizations (Al-Ansi & Han, 2019).

Destination attributes are attracting tourists to a certain destination (Pesonen & Komppula, 2010). Attractiveness is a necessary pull factor of destination. Without attractions there are no destination (Vengesayi, 2003). Destination attractions are core factors of attractiveness, which are followed by service facilities and people-related factors (Vengesayi, Mavondo and Reisinger, 2009).

Destination communication requires an information channel, which is a method to communicate information to the receiver. (Grønflatlen, 2009) The main purpose of destination communication is to transmit the destination image in a suitable way to consumers. Accessibility ensures the development of products, services and environments in a way that everyone has an access on them (Gillovic and McIntosh, 2020).

1.4 VisitKarelia

VisitKarelia is a destination management and marketing (DMO) organization, which operates in North Karelia. VisitKarelia is owned by 13 north Karelian municipalities – Joensuu, Lieksa, Ilomantsi, Nurmes, Juuka, Kontiolahti, Liperi, Rääkkylä, Kitee, Polvijärvi, Outokumpu, Tohmajärvi and the newest member Heinävesi. Company's mission is to develop and market North Karelia professionally as a sustainable destination. VisitKarelia co-operates together with local companies, sales and distribution channels, media, marketing partners and also local people and tourists. (VisitKarelia, 2021)

VisitKarelia has four main market segments, which are domestic travelers, Russians, Asian market and DACH-market (VisitKarelia, 2021). German market is the second biggest segment after Russians (Visit Finland, 2021). According to their experience, DACH-market is the hardest segment to reach, and it is worthwhile to study further, which communication channels and messages are most suitable and attractive to German customers (Tervakorpi, 2021).

2 Theoretical framework

2.1 Destination competitiveness

Firstly, it is useful to define the concept of a destination. There have been many researches and approaches to the certain theme. Mostly destinations are defined by political jurisdictions, which can be following: a nation or a country, a macro-region, like Europe, a province or state, a localized region within a country, a city or town or a unique locale, like national park. (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003) Another classical definition of a destination is, that there are geographical factors. To be called as a destination, it should include attractions, accommodation and transportation both to the destination and within the area. (Jovicic, 2017)

Competitiveness is a necessary part of a business if you want to succeed. Competitive destinations are attracting customers, provides memorable and multidimensional experiences, benefits

both companies and local residents and acts in sustainable way. In addition, other key determinants of the competitive destination are good infrastructure, natural and cultural resources, tourism governance and general business environment. Usually, it is a sum up of various stakeholders, who are working together and has their own impacts on competitiveness. (Ivanov & Ivanova, 2016) Even the main factors would remain, the changing nature of competition requires actions and reassessments to stay on track (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003). Based on Jovicic (2017) study also social media is gaining even more and more importance in destination management and attractiveness. Understanding better your customers increases the possibility to create more personalized services and products. That leads then into customer satisfaction. (Jovicic, 2017)

According to Ritchie and Crouch (2003) tourism destinations have multidimensional strengths, which are economic, social, cultural, political, technological and environmental. They also stated that it is useful to measure competitiveness in several dimensions, not only in single dimension. Especially destinations with unique environment and nature resources can build their competitiveness with environmental strengths and have other dimensions as supportive strengths. Crouch (2011) expanded this destination competitiveness model with five core factors. Those are 1) supporting factors and resources, 2) core resources and attractions, 3) destination management, 4) destination policy, planning and development and 5) qualifying and amplifying determinants. The core findings of each of these factors that have the highest importance weights for the local entrepreneurs were accessibility, quality of service/experience, climate and physiography, safety and security and positioning/branding. (Crouch, 2011) Especially, accessibility, sustainability and quality of service and experience will be necessary part of this master's thesis. These factors will be examined both from the destination image and destination communication point of view.

2.2 Destination image

Destination image consists of cognitive, affective and conative (Agapito, Oom do Valle & da Costa Mendes, 2012; Gartner, 1994; Lojo, Li & Xu, 2020), also called global (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999),

dimensions. In addition, personal factors like motivations, values and personality, and stimulus factors like previous experience and information sources are having an impact on formation of destination image. Together all of these factors build an overall destination image. The cognitive evaluations refer to one's beliefs, impressions and knowledge about a certain destination and simultaneously affective evaluations refer to feelings and emotional reactions towards the destination and its attributes. A conative aspect refers to one's behaviour like visit intentions and actions in a destination. (Baloglu and McCleary, 1999; Lojo et al. 2020; Agapito et al., 2012, Gartner, 1994)

Tourism destination image is seen as a sum of beliefs, impressions and ideas of a one person (Lojo, Li & Xu, 2020). Destination images have a strong impact on destination choice because tourism destinations are intangible and tourists do not have much previous knowledge or experiences about the destination (Kim & Perdue, 2011; Tasci & Gartner, 2007). To attract more international arrivals to a destination, the overall destination image has a significant role in tourism marketing. A development of a destination image has become a remarkable tool for the local destination marketing organizations. (Al-Ansi & Han, 2019) Molinillo, Liébana-Cabanillas, Anaya-Sánchez and Buhalis (2018) founded out that tourist involvement is having a positive impact both on cognitive and affective image of a destination. They also discovered that information channel and the used platforms for information search have relation to the intentions to visit a certain destination and what kind of destination image the consumers form.

In a study of Beerli and Martin (2004) all factors that impact on destination image were divided into nine dimensions including different attributes. Those categories were 1) natural resources, 2) general infrastructure, 3) tourist infrastructure, 4) tourist leisure and recreation, 5) culture, history and art, 6) political and economic factors, 7) natural environment, 8) social environment and 9) atmosphere of the place.

Formation of a destination image consists of following three parts: information sources, personal factors and perceived destination image. Information sources includes both primary and secondary sources. Primary sources are for instance consumers' previous experiences and secondary sources are organic and induced, which gives information before experiencing a

destination. Personal factors involve one's motivations, socio-demographic factors and traveling experiences. Perceived destination image is a combination of all three above mentioned dimensions, cognitive, affective and conative images, which builds an overall image of a destination. (Beerli & Martin, 2004)

2.2.1 Identity

Saraniemi (2009) stated that destination identity refers to the core of the destination building simultaneously the internal aspects of the brand. According to her, the core of the identity is culture and especially from the attractiveness point of view. In addition, destination communication includes both controlled and uncontrolled communication between destination and stakeholders. Unlike earlier researches about corporations' identity (Balmer, 2008; Melewar & Karaosmanoglu, 2006) Saraniemi (2009) claimed that destination identity can exists also without structures and strategies.

According to Saraniemi (2009) destination identity consists of different components – destination culture, destination structure, destination strategy, destination communication, visitors, stakeholders and environment. In this model destination culture is the core. It includes destination's values, history, stories, local people and communities, attractions, location, natural-, cultural and sociocultural resources and sub-cultures. From these especially, history and location are issues to which DMO cannot impact. Destination structure includes DMO's organizational structure and brand structure meaning destination specific tourist products. Destination strategy covers company's or destination's vision and mission, positioning and differentiation in the tourism field.

Destination communication is a wide component and includes both verbal and visual communication. The verbal side takes into account destination marketing communication and publicity, customer contacts and word of mouth (WOM). In addition, the destination design forms the visual side with slogans, websites and physical layouts. Additionally, visitors are creating their own destination identity based on their earlier experiences, values, meanings and expectations.

Stakeholders and environment are helping to fulfill and manage the identity. (Saraniemi, 2009)

These components altogether form a destination identity.

VisitKarelia ponders if sustainability is a significant factor to stand out from other destinations. Does it have a positive impact on destination choice or not a significant role at all? In October 2021 there are eight companies in North Karelia with Sustainable Travel Finland -certificate. (VisitKarelia, 2021) There are still potential to increase that number and provide sustainable products and services also without that certificate. Also, VisitKarelia's (2021) strategy is to have at least half of the local businesses into sustainable program within the year 2025. It is an important factor for the nature but also for the incoming tourists.

Hall (2018) stated that sustainable development has nowadays a major focus in tourism businesses both in destination marketing organizations and local companies. Sustainable tourism aims to maintain and enhance the protection of environment, economic growth and social and cultural integrity. Mostly the focus is in environmental and economic aspects but more often also the social sustainability is highlighted. (Gillovic and McIntosh, 2020) To maintain and guarantee the long-term sustainability, it is necessary to find a balance between all the three dimensions (UNWTO, 2021b). The main challenges of sustainable tourism are high energy consumption, food waste, weak business environment, waste management, limited access to finance and low levels of investments. There are also three major factors, which have an impact on CO2 emissions. Those are number of tourists, number of trips in long haul tourism and frequent holidays for a shorter length of stay. (Pan et. al, 2018)

ReiseAnalyse (2021a) found out that German travelers are more interested about sustainable holidays than before, and they are looking for trips away from mass tourism destinations. Also, holiday by the lake is having a high interest among Germans. However, it is good to notice that Covid-19 may have a significant impact on these preferences. According to UNWTO (2021b), it is important to raise the awareness about sustainability and highlight the sustainable manners and issues among tourists to ensure meaningful experiences.

2.2.2 Attributes

According to Vengesayi et. al (2009) destination attractions are the core factors of attractiveness. After that follows destination support facilities and services, and people-related factors.

Vengesayi (2003) stated that destination competitiveness is related to supply and attractiveness from the demand of tourism. Attractiveness reflects the feelings and opinions of its visitors as a purpose to satisfy the visitors and it is therefore the major value is to be a pulling factor. Pull factors are destination specific attributes which lures travelers to a certain destination after they have decided to travel (Pesonen & Komppula, 2010). Without attractions there are no destination (Vengesayi, 2009). Attractions can be for instance nature resources and cultural heritage (Cracolici & Nijkamp, 2009).

According to Pesonen and Komppula (2010) a typical Finnish rural holiday includes accommodation in a cottage, sauna, local food and some nature activities like walking in a forest or swimming. Rural tourism destinations locate usually on countryside away from services and neighbors. In Sweden the most mentioned attributes among German tourists are rural settings, peaceful surroundings and nature, and location close to a lake (Zillinger et al., 2018). Another study was conducted in Norway including following attributes mentioned by Germans: midnight sun and reindeer, people in harmony with the nature, unspoiled nature and northern lights (Jensen, Chen & Korneliussen, 2015).

Zillinger et al. (2018) also researched Germans' leisure interests both on journey and home and discovered following categories: culture (including e.g., music, theatre and reading), hiking and experiences in nature, traveling, gardening, socializing, other sports and general hobbies like photographing. The other categories, which were mentioned but was not ranked so high on the list were bicycling, motors, water sports, camping, hunting, skiing, relaxing and politics.

ReiseAnalyse (2021b) researched Germans' traveling habits and motivations to travel. They found out that only 71 % of respondents had an image of Finland as a holiday destination when meanwhile in Sweden the percent was 81. Nevertheless, the gap between these two countries have narrowed within the last 5 years. In 2016 Finland was known only among 67 % of

respondents when at the same time Sweden was leading with 85 %. These numbers show that Finland is gaining more visibility and becoming more relevant and even competitor for Sweden. ReiseAnalyse (2021b) also ranked destinations with different image criteria – unique and sustainable. In this ranking Finland was the most unique destination with significant lead and held the second place as a sustainable destination, only Austria was ahead.

The respondents (ReiseAnalyse, 2021b) who had an image of Finland as a holiday destination were asked to describe Finland with one word that comes to mind. The top words were cold, nature, lakes, Helsinki, scenery, forest, sauna and snow. Then the potential travelers who had intention to travel to Finland within the next five years ranked the special highlights of Finland. Those attributes were following: northern lights, lakes, midnight sun, forests, finding happiness, Finland's coast and archipelago, freedom, sauna, special accommodation and Santa Claus. As it shows, many of the attributes are nature related but also some intangible features are mentioned. The findings are rather similar with earlier studies mentioned above (Zillinger et al., 2018; Jensen et al., 2015).

When they were asked to tell, what kind of things they would like to experience in Finland, the most mentioned feature was experiences in nature. The next were local food and drinks, culture and sightseeing. One important factor was also to have time for oneself and experience local traditions. (ReiseAnalyse, 2021b)

According to research of Business Finland (2019) the German travelers' top internet searches concerning Finland were vacation packages, northern lights, travel, camping, igloos ice hotels and tourism attractions. In addition, they search for holiday apartments, cities, holiday packages and Santa Claus. Especially vacation packages and northern lights had increased the number of searchers significantly from 2018 to 2019.

In case of North Karelia, the most popular attractions are Koli National Park and other three national parks (Patvinsuo, Petkeljärvi and Kolovesi), city of Joensuu and Bomba area in Nurmes. Despite that it is unknown, which attractions are familiar to German tourists and what kind of attractions and attributes they are seeking for when traveling to North Karelia. Tervakorpi (2021)

mentioned that especially nature and culture are the most interesting attributes and reasons to travel to North Karelia. The one aim of this study is to get better understanding of this issue.

2.3 Destination communication

2.3.1 Communication channels

In general, accessibility means ensuring the development of products, services and environments in a way that everyone has an access on them (Gillovic and McIntosh, 2020). Accessibility for all should be a core part of any responsible and sustainable tourism business, meaning an access to tourism facilities, products and services (UNWTO, 2021a). Accessible tourism includes mobility, vision, hearing and cognitive dimensions (Gillovic and McIntosh, 2020). In addition, Buhalis and Michopoulou (2010) named speech, mental/intellectual, hidden impairment and the elderly population.

In this study accessibility in a person's physical and psychical way will not be researched. On the contrary, this mobility and how people have access on destination will be studied further in this master's thesis. Attractions and destinations in North Karelia are located rather far away from cities, airport, and bus and train stations, so tourists need either own car or another way to move from place to another. One important fact is that especially for German tourists the language option might be a crucial factor when choosing a destination. If they cannot find information in German or in English, they probably choose another destination or website to search more detailed.

Information search process is one of the most primary stages in decision-making process, where marketers can have an influence on consumers. Therefore, it is important to understand which channels they are utilizing and what kind of information they are seeking for. (Gursoy, 2019) According to Grønflaten (2009) an information channel is a method to communicate information to the receiver. For instance, TV, printed media, face-to-face communication and internet can be

tourist information channels. Ho, Lin and Chen (2012) pointed out that also a range of new online technologies like social media has emerged.

Al-Ansi & Han (2019) stated that media and digital tools are necessary marketing channels to promote destination image. Lojo et al. (2020) confirmed that online sources and social media are essential to form a destination image nowadays. Usually, tourists are using a combination of different channels to search and get proper information (Zillinger, Eskilsson, Måansson & Nilsson, 2018; Jacobsen & Munar, 2012; Grønflaten, 2012). Nowadays it is obvious that internet is playing a big role in communication. Zillinger, Eskilsson, Måansson and Nilsson (2018) stated that tourists' previous experiences and knowledge of a certain destination may have an impact on their online search behaviour. According to Murphy, Chen and Cossutta (2016) PC is the most used device for information search. After that comes smartphones and tablets. They also discovered that usually people are using the same device when searching information and rarely using multiple devices during the process.

Internet provides enormously information whereas other channels and sources offer more fragmented information (Ho, Lin, Yuan & Chen, 2016). Online platforms like social media and websites are providing DMOs one of the most important tools for promoting and building a destination image. However, the image formation also depends on the target markets and how travellers access the information from a certain platform. (Molinillo et al., 2018) Facebook and blogs are not seem as important channels in destination decision-making process as traditional channels. It was also found that official DMOs' websites are having a low importance in decision-making. (Jacobsen & Munar, 2012)

Zillinger et al. (2018) and Zillinger (2020a) brought up that guidebooks help tourist to plan their trips but is also part of the formation of tourism identity. They stated that guidebooks are giving hedonic values, which technology cannot offer. For instance, books are not dependable on battery or Wi-Fi-connection, they offer solid information in one package but can also be a status symbol after a journey when others can see your book in a bookshelf.

Murphy et al. (2016) founded that general search engines are the most used source of information. After that comes family and friends, suppliers' sites, OTAs and review sites. Zillinger et al. (2018) and Zillinger (2020b) discovered that German tourists are using various sources to find information, but the most important ones are following: homepages, guidebooks, own experience, maps, brochures and word-of-mouth (WOM). Social media is so far only on 10th place after tourist information center, magazines and newspapers and travel agents. These results are rather surprising. Even homepages are on the top, the traditional channels are strongly following. Two years later homepages/web pages had dropped on the 4th place and social media had raised in rank on 9th place, when simultaneously traditional channels and sources kept their places (Zillinger, 2020a). Also earlier, Jacobsen and Munar (2012) stated that traditional information channels like WOM, websites and own experiences are having high impact on destination choice. It would be worthwhile to study further if these channels are still rated in this order.

ReiseAnalyse (2021a) found out that German travelers use primarily following information sources when planning a holiday – press and news with 36 %, Google and other search engines (33 %), Federal Foreign Office (=Auswärtiges Amt, 29 %), Robert Koch Institute (=Robert Koch Institut, provides current information about Covid-19 recommendations and changes, 29 %), accommodation (26 %) and tour operators (25 %). After that comes friends and relatives (24 %), travel agencies (24 %), review platforms (23 %), DMO of destination (18 %) and other corona data sources (15 %). Social media is surprisingly just in the last place with 8 % together with transport providers and other unnamed sources. It is significant that Covid-19 has an impact on used channels but despite that traditional information sources like press, tour operators and travel agencies are raised also strongly in this study.

Tölkes (2018a) conducted a literature review of sustainable communication and found out that the most researched and used communication channels are non-personal communication channels like media, organizations websites, hotel information and certifications. Printed media, travel magazines and online advertisement was not researched that much. She also found out that sustainable communication usually has a positive impact on tourists' travel behavior but there are still gaps, what kind of messages actually work and how much tourists know for instance about different certificates and labels.

2.3.2 How to communicate

Zillinger (2020a) pointed out that tourism research is indicating that both analogue and digital channels are important while tourism companies are highly focusing on digital channels. Based on her research among German tourists, 62,8 % of tourists combined analogue and digital channels when searching information before their journey. 32,8 % of respondents used only analogue channels whereas only 4,9 % used digital channels alone. These results tell that Germans are highly trusting also on traditional information sources.

An earlier study revealed that Germans are looking for information in two major ways. Firstly, they read general information and mostly look for the images and headings. Secondly, they start to search for more detailed information for instance about accommodation, transportation and specific attractions. It was discovered that images were more important than descriptions especially when they were looking for an accommodation. (Zillinger, 2020b)

Consumers are more likely utilizing information sources which do not require lots of effort to minimize confusion and information overload (Gursoy, 2019). English is the lingua franca, which is used in most of the European tourist information and international online travel commerce (Jacobsen & Munar, 2021). Earlier research revealed that Germans find difficulties to find information from web pages. One significant problem concerned language. They started to search information from page in German, but the following links were in other language, which made things more difficult. They stated that homepages in German are essential for the tourists. Also, to get the right feeling, the text is less relevant than pictures on the pages. Germans highly appreciate when they can get service and traveling tips in German. They find it more reliable and personal. (Zillinger et al., 2018)

Earlier research discovered that official websites of DMO requires high degree of user involvement and not significantly adds the intention to visit destination even it influences on both affective and cognitive image. Also, Facebook has similar effects as websites but has even lower intentions to pay a visit to a destination. On the contrary, Instagram requires less involvement from users but builds and promotes well destination image. (Molinillo et al., 2018) Gursoy (2019)

disagreed and stated that social media channels like Facebook and Instagram are very time consuming and requires lots of cognitive effort to search information.

Gursoy, Del Chiappa and Zhang (2018) studied that travelers utilize only small amount of external information sources when searching information. They discovered that destination familiarity has a high impact on usage of information sources. Also, international travelers are trusting more on traditional word-of-mouth sources like friends and relatives, travel agents and printed media. Unlike the general belief, Gursoy et al. (2018) stated that social media channels like Facebook does not have a significant impact on destination choice. There also seems to be a connection between tourists' characteristics like demographics and socio-economic status, and information search behaviour (Kang, Kim & Park, 2021).

2.3.3 What to communicate

The communication should promote both the most relevant information and the most characterized products and specialties of the area. Firstly, destinations should identify the most dominant attributes and then in addition to find the most specific characteristics of the destination to compete on markets. (Vinyals-Mirabent, 2019) Tourism companies rely highly on online channels and utilizes internet as a one of the main marketing channels. Nevertheless, many marketers fail to success due to the lack of knowledge how consumers are behaving, what kind of information they are looking for and from which channels. (Gursoy, 2019)

Rodríguez-Molina, Frías-Jamilena and Castañeda-García (2015) discovered that the destination image will be more positive when there have been used emotional messages and when consumers are not getting too much information at the same time. The information overload in this context means that on DMO's website are too many attributes and alternative tourist services that consumers get confused and cannot decide, which one to choose or explore further.

Sustainability communication is aiming to inform travelers about availability of sustainable products and services, and how they fulfill the criteria of sustainability. Communication supposed to

enhance also sustainable pre-purchases. (Kapoor, Balaji & Jiang, 2021) Worldwide companies are moving towards sustainability and providing more products and services with sustainable values. However, in many cases companies are not communicating about their achievements and improvements (Tiago, Gil, Stemberger & Borges-Tiago, 2021) even sustainability is playing a big role in tourism marketing (Cuculeski, Petrovska & Cuculeski, 2016). According to Tölkes (2018a) even 57 % of made researches until 2018 concerned sustainability communication from the environmental point of view. These results show that there are still lack of knowledge about sustainability and the different aspects of it. Communication is hard when companies do not know what kind of actions and issues can be included in sustainable communication.

Sustainability communication should include all four dimensions: environmental criteria, cultural criteria, socio-economic criteria and sustainability certification. Environmental criteria consist of balance between travel duration and distance, water and energy saving, rail and fly and atmosphere. Cultural criteria take into account the respect of local culture. To socio-economic criteria belongs both local food and fair working conditions. Sustainability certification includes different kinds of certificates, which are supporting sustainable tourism and traveling. (Tölkes, 2018b)

Tölkes (2018a) stated that it is worthwhile to study further the meaning of sustainable communication from the perspective of demographics e.g., age, gender, level of education and income level. Also, she suggested, that message design, layouts and format of sustainable topics are important to investigate in the future. Previous study showed that regardless of consumers level of environmental knowledge, they are not considering eco-labels as a significant criteria when choosing an accommodation (Tiago et al., 2021). Also, Tölkes (2018b) discovered that many travelers are not even aware of sustainability certificates and features when they are booking for instance an accommodation. All of them seems to be more or less invisible to consumers or they have difficulties to recognize the sustainability attributes from the context.

Cuculeski et al. (2016) discovered that the sustainability marketing efforts should be targeted to the age group of 26-35 years old and whom has a university degree. Also, social media and television have the highest impact on decision making process. According to them it is necessary to market sustainability to gain improvements in tourism offers. According to Kapoor et al. (2021)

stated that eco-friendly hotels' sustainability communication with sensual message is having more positive impact on pre-purchases than guilt appeal messages. They also discovered that there is no significant connection between respondents' environmental concern and the effectiveness of different kind of sustainability messages. An interesting finding was that guilt appeal messages work better when social media influencer posts it instead of eco-friendly hotel.

2.4 Theory conclusion

Destination competitiveness is a large concept and includes many factors. In this master's thesis specially destination image and destination communication will be focused on more detailed (see Figure 1). Destination competitiveness covers the question **How to get German tourists to visit North Karelia**. What makes North Karelia so special that it attracts tourists? Destination image explains both destination identity and destination attributes. It combines destination's own vision and visitors' vision together creating the big picture. The main focus in this master's thesis will be on the issue, how to communicate this destination image with all specific attributes to German tourists.

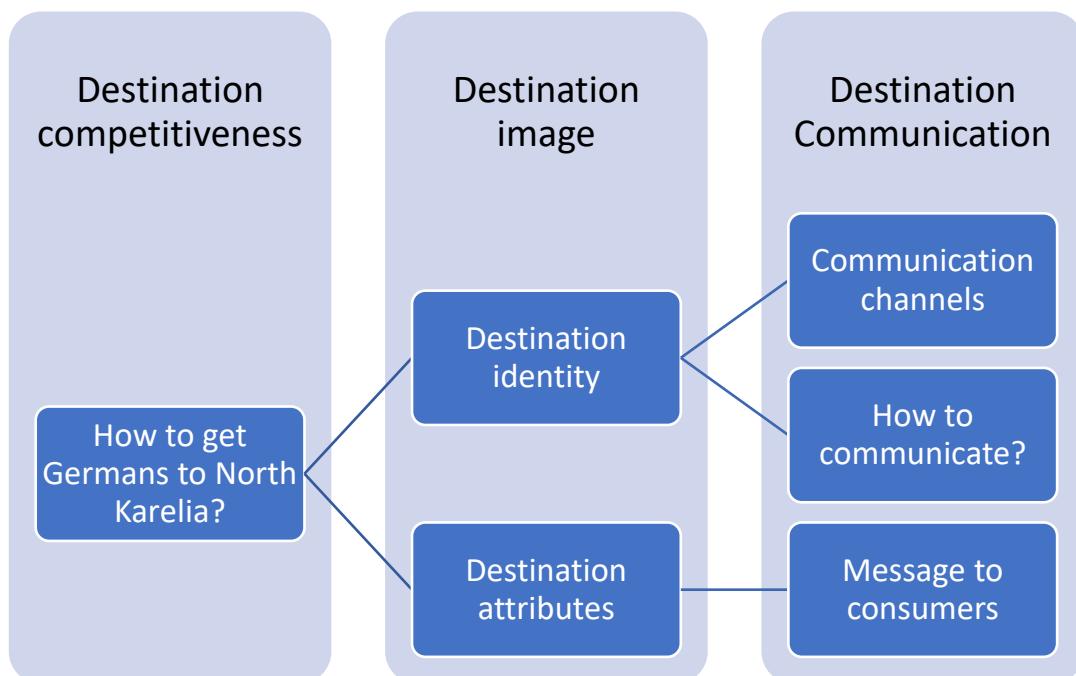


Figure 1. Theoretical framework.

Destination communication will be viewed from three different aspects – communication channels, what is the way to communicate and what kind of messages to give to consumers (see Figure 2). Communication channels includes both new and traditional channels and cover especially the accessibility point of view. It is worthwhile to study further, which channels are the best and preferred to reach German tourists. It is also useful to research how to communicate, meaning for instance which language to use, text versus visuality and what actually is attractive. The last aspect to examine is the actual message which will be given to German consumers. Especially, the significance of sustainability in destination communication will be researched further.

Destination Communication		
Communication channels	How to communicate?	Message to consumers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility (the key point of view) • Social media • Web sites • Traditional media (tv, radio, printed media etc.) • Travel agencies, tour operators • WOM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attractiveness (the key point of view) • Language • Text, pictures, videos • Visuality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability (the key point of view) • What kind of information consumers want to find?

Figure 2. Theoretical Framework of Destination Communication.

3 Methodology

3.1 Research method

Usually, research methods can be divided into two – qualitative and quantitative studies (Muijs, 2011). This study will be a quantitative study. The purpose of quantitative study is to collect numerical data to explain a phenomena by analyzing it with mathematical methods. With quantitative studies it is also possible to test different hypotheses and to explain relationship between different variables. It provides information from a large samples and from wide perspective. (Muijs, 2011)

For this master's thesis quantitative study is suitable because it helps to achieve and analyze data from large sample size and to gain understanding of German tourists as a phenomena. At this point, it is more beneficial to understand the segment in general level and not focus on only few tourists to give their in-depth opinions and views of the topic. The similar topics are studied already earlier with quantitative studies and the results have gained new information of German tourists in Sweden and Finland (Zillinger et al., 2018; DMO VisitKarelia, 2021; ReiseAnalyse 2021a; ReiseAnalyse 2021b).

3.2 Data collection

In this study, the data collection will be conducted with an online survey. The questionnaire will be based on the theoretical background, including destination competitiveness, destination image and communication, to find out how to communicate the image of North Karelia to German travelers. Majority of the questions are derived or modified from previous literature and studies to allow the comparison with other researches and to gain wider understanding of the topic. In addition, there are questions from VisitKarelia to get answers to their thoughts and concerns.

Within a Signal project, VisitKarelia conducted an online survey in summer 2021 in collaboration with Nordic Marketing aiming to reach German markets and potential customers, who are

willing to travel to Finland. Nordic Marketing has a Finnland Rundreisen -Facebook community with circa 27 000 German speaking consumers to whom it is possible to send B2C questionnaires. (Tervakorpi, 2021) It was necessary to have sample of German tourists, who are already somehow familiar with Finland and possibly with North Karelia as well to gain realistic information of their motives and traveling habits. Nordic Marketing was chosen, because they were already familiar with VisitKarelia, their followers are Finland enthusiasts and somehow familiar with the destination. As a marketing segment, their followers are very potential travelers to consider North Karelia as a destination. Targeting the online survey to all Germans would have been too wide segment to reach realistic responses and useful information.

The survey was firstly written and designed in English (see Appendix 2) with an online program called Webropol. Secondly, the questionnaire was translated to German (see Appendix 3). German was chosen to avoid misunderstandings and to get the most realistic and honest answers. The questionnaire was pre-tested with instructors and VisitKarelia to ensure that everything functions technically properly. After that it was tested with several German native speakers to verify the translations that every question is written grammatically correct, and they are comprehensible in a right way.

The questionnaire was divided into seven different sections which were the following: background information of traveling in Finland, North Karelia potential, information channels (both online channels and traditional channels), attributes, marketing communication, demographics and VisitKarelia. In addition, there was a lottery in the end of the questionnaire. In total, the questionnaire includes 26 questions. In the questionnaire there are 17 multiple choice questions, four open questions, four question with Likert scale 1-5 and one question for the contact details. The questionnaires in English and in German, as well as the theoretical background of the survey (see Appendix 1) are attached in the end of this master's thesis.

All of the respondents had opportunity to take part of the lottery in the end of the survey. The prize was north Karelian product package, which price was circa 40 euros. It included KUPILKA dining set with VisitKarelia's logo. The main purpose of the lottery was to inspire people to

answer more actively and to gain more responses. The prize was representing North Karelian design and sustainability.

The online survey was published on Finnland Rundreisen -Facebook group in the beginning of February 2022 and was available and open for four weeks. According to the information details of the Facebook group, there were at that moment 26 517 followers who were able to see the post and click the link to the online survey. After one and a half week there were in total only ten responses. Since the response rate was extremely low, author decided to add more distribution channels to achieve more replies.

New channels were decided and founded in collaboration with VisitKarelia. Firstly, a Finnish-German blogger and his channel called Finntouch – Finnland hautnah was contacted. He published the online questionnaire on Facebook and on Instagram story. In February 2022, Finntouch – Finnland hautnah had on Facebook 10 000 followers and on Instagram 3 700 followers. Secondly, two German magazines, NORR Skandinavien-Magazin and Nordis, were contacted. Both magazines are popular in Germany, and they are marketing Scandinavian countries to Germans. Both of the magazines have ca. 14 000 followers on Facebook. Neither NORR nor Nordis replied to emails.

The blogger reminded his followers after a one week and posted the link again on Instagram and Facebook stories. That gained some responses more but not significantly anymore. After a month author decided to close the online survey and began to analyze the answers due to the lack of time and the potential segment was already reached from those exact channels. The online survey link was opened 844 times. 294 started to fill up the survey. In total, 209 responses were received from two Facebook groups, Finntouch – Finnland hautnah and Finnland Rundreisen. According to the follower numbers on their social media channels, the posts could have reach together 40 217 respondents. Consequently, the response rate was only 0,0052 %.

3.3 Analysis of the data

The data was collected online, and all data were transformed into IBM SPSS Statistic 27 to make further analysis. SPSS was chosen as it was the most familiar software for author and all quantitative analysis were possible to make with SPSS. Also, for couple open ended questions (Q5 and Q24) author used ATLAS.ti, which is a qualitative data analysis software, to analyze the qualitative material. However, the main focus on this study was on quantitative analysis.

Firstly, the frequencies of demographic responses (Q16, Q18-Q23) were analyzed through descriptive statistic on SPSS. Also, the frequencies of questions related to traveling habits and traveling background (Q1-Q4, Q6-Q11) were examined. These analysis were done to get the overall image of respondents traveling background and demographics.

Secondly, age groups were made with SPSS by recoding age into a new variable. Five different age groups were made based on Germany's age statistics. Then the frequencies of different age groups were analyzed through descriptive statistics. Also, respondents were divided into two groups, and they formed new variable. The one group included respondents, who have visited North Karelia once or several times. On the contrary, the second group included people who have not visited North Karelia. The demographics between these groups were analyzed with descriptive statistics and crosstabs. Crosstabs analysis shows the relationships between different variables and helps to discover the balance between different subgroups, as in this case age groups. The new variable of North Karelia visitors was used. Gender, age, income and family status were compared to see, if there are any significant differences between the visitors and non-visitors. Also, this analysis helped to discover different profiles of the travelers and if there are some significant differences between Germans who have been in North Karelia and who have not.

For other analysis, respondents were also divided into three groups – those who have visited North Karelia, those who have not visited but know something about North Karelia and those who have not visited and know nothing about it. These three groups were compared with respondents' knowledge and image about VisitKarelia. As the question about VisitKarelia (Q24) was

open ended question, all the answers were recoded by hand in SPSS into six different categories. By recoding all the qualitative answers got a new value, which was possible to analyze as a quantitative material. Descriptive statistics and crosstabs were used also on this question.

Also, Q5 was open ended question about North Karelia knowledge. Author was interested to discover qualitative material further and these answers were recoded by hand as well to make deeper analysis with SPSS. These responses were examined from the perspective of location and connection to Russia. All answers with Russia connection were coded as 1 and other answers were 0. These two groups were then compared with willingness to travel to North Karelia.

The questions Q12, Q13, Q14 and Q15 were converted into ordinal and new mean variables were computed of each question in SPSS. All questions with Likert scale (Q12-Q15) were compared with age groups to see, if there are significant differences between age segments. The Likert scale questions concerned most actively used online channels and traditional channels, destination attributes and marketing communication statements. Also, the destination attributes were compared with North Karelia visitors and non-visitors. These relationships between different groups were analyzed further. There were two options – either to use a T-test or One-Way ANOVA -test. The questions were analyzed further with One-Way ANOVA -test as there were more than two groups two analyze. T-test could have been suitable when there is only one group to analyze. Mean values, standard deviation, F-value and statistical significance (sig.) were investigated. If the sig-value (in other words p-value) is $< 0,05$, the results are statistically significant. The purpose of One-Way ANOVA -test is to show if there are significant statistical differences between the means and different groups. (Liang, Fu & Wang, 2019)

4 Findings

4.1 Demographics – Profile of German tourist

In total, 209 responded to this online survey. Based on the results, the socio-demographics of the respondents are presented detailed in the following table (see Table 3). It represents the profile of a potential German tourist, who would be interested to travel to North Karelia or are other way interested about Finland and North Karelia.

	Count	Frequency		Count	Frequency
Gender (n=209)			Occupation (n=209)		
Male	41	19,6 %	Employed	178	85,2 %
Female	166	79,4 %	Student	13	6,2 %
Other	2	1,0 %	Other	4	1,9 %
Age groups (n=209)			Income level (n=209)		
65 years old or older	8	3,8 %	Below the average	89	42,6 %
60–64 years old	10	4,8 %	The average	65	31,1 %
40–59 years old	119	56,9 %	Above the average	55	26,3 %
25–39 years old	61	29,2 %			
25 years old or younger	11	5,3 %			
Family (n=209)					
Single without kids	53	25,4 %			
Single with kids	8	3,8 %			
In relationship without kids	65	31,1 %			
In relationship with kids	83	39,7 %			

Table 3. Socio-demographics of the respondents.

In total, all the questions related to demographics reached 209 responses on each question. Most of the respondents were females with 79,4 % frequency. 19,6 % of them were males and 1 % chose the option “other”. The age scale of the respondents varied between 19 to 79 years old. According to Statista (2022a), in 2020 there were circa 83 million inhabitants in Germany. The biggest age group was 40-59 years old with 23,4 million inhabitants (28,2 %), the second biggest age group was 65 years or older with 18,3 million (22,0 %) and the third group was 25-39 years old with 15,8 million (19,0 %). The following age groups were 6-13 years old (6 million; 7,2 %) and 60-64 years old (5,8 million; 7,0 %). Rest of the inhabitants (14 million; 16,9 %) were younger than

25 years old and were divided into five different age groups. According to this study, the biggest age group is as well 40-59 years old (56,9 %). The second biggest age group is 25-39 years old (29,2 %). The other age groups are rather even: 25 years old or younger (5,3 %), 60-64 years old (4,8 %) and 65 years old or older (3,8 %). Otherwise, the results are representing the age balance of German inhabitants but the 65+ age group is significantly smaller. One distinct reason might be that the oldest age group is not using Facebook and therefore could not attempt on survey.

The most frequent occupation of the respondents was employed with 85,2 %. 1,9 % were unemployed, 4,8 % pensioners and 6,2 % students. 1,9 % answered other option with following titles: **Schülerin/berufstätig** (=student/employed), **Pensionärin** (=pensioner), **Hausfrau und Mutter** (=housewife) and **selbständig** (=entrepreneur). Nevertheless, those open responses did not significantly change the frequencies and can be stated that most of the respondents were employed.

The income level was based on Statista's (2022b) information of the average gross salary per month in Germany, which in year 2020 was 3975 €. 42,6 % of the respondents identified themselves below the average, 31,1 % answered the average and rest 26,3 % of the respondents were above the average. The family status was also asked. According to the results, 39,7 % of respondents were in relationship and have one or several kids. 31,1 % were in relationship without children and 25,4 % were single without children. Only 3,8 % of respondents were single with kids.

In table 4 are presented more closely the education levels of the respondents. Circa one quarter of the respondents (26,8 %) have apprenticeship as their highest education. Second highest education level was diploma (=Degree that someone received after their studies before the Master/Bachelor system was implemented) with 18,7 %. The following education levels were High-school Degree (14,4 %), Master's Degree (12,9 %) and Bachelor's Degree (10,5 %).

	Count	Frequency
Education level (n=209)		
Doctoral Degree	7	3,3 %
Diploma	39	18,7 %
Master's Degree	27	12,9 %
Bachelor's Degree	22	10,5 %
Apprenticeship	56	26,8 %
Highschool Degree	30	14,4 %
Degree between Middle- and Highschool	14	6,7 %
Middle school Degree	4	1,9 %
Other	10	4,8 %

Table 4. Education level of the respondents.

The results show that majority of the respondents are rather highly educated or having a vocational education. 4,8 % of respondents answered "other" option and they brought forth following educations: **Volksschule 8 Klassen** (= primary school, 8th grade), **Fachhochschulereife** (=High-school Degree), **Fachwirt** (=is similar to Bachelor's Degree), **Staatsexamen** (n=2, =The State Examination), **Hauptschule** (n=2, =secondary school), **Meister** (=Master's Degree), **Hochschulabschluss** (=Bachelor's Degree or higher) and **Abitur** (=Highschool Degree). These freely written education levels show that respondents were not able to find suitable option from the list even they have answered similar educations with different names. However, most of the responses are representing high education levels.

West and South Germany were significantly the most active areas to respond to the survey (see figure 3). As the table 5 shows, every fifth (20,10 %) of the respondents were from Bavaria, 16,30 % from North Rhine-Westphalia and 13,40 % from Baden-Württemberg. The next active provinces were Lower Saxony (11,5 %), Hesse (11,0 %), Schleswig-Holstein (5,7 %) and Saxony (5,3 %). As the map shows, eastern part of Germany had the lowest response rates. Per provinces, the lowest respond rates were in Hamburg (3,8 %), Rhineland-Palatinate (3,8 %), Thuringia (3,4 %), Berlin (2,4 %), Brandenburg (1,4 %), Saxony-Anhalt (1,4 %) and Saarland (0,5 %). Two provinces, Bremen and Mecklenburg-Western Pomeranian were not mentioned even once.

	Count	Frequency
Residence (n=209)		
Bavaria	42	20,1 %
North Rhine-Westphalia	34	16,3 %
Baden-Württemberg	28	13,4 %
Lower Saxony	24	11,5 %
Hesse	23	11,0 %
Schleswig-Holstein	12	5,7 %
Saxony	11	5,3 %
Hamburg	8	3,8 %
Rhineland-Palatinate	8	3,8 %
Thuringia	7	3,4 %
Berlin	5	2,4 %
Brandenburg	3	1,4 %
Saxony-Anhalt	3	1,4 %
Saarland	1	0,5 %

Table 5. Residences of the respondents.

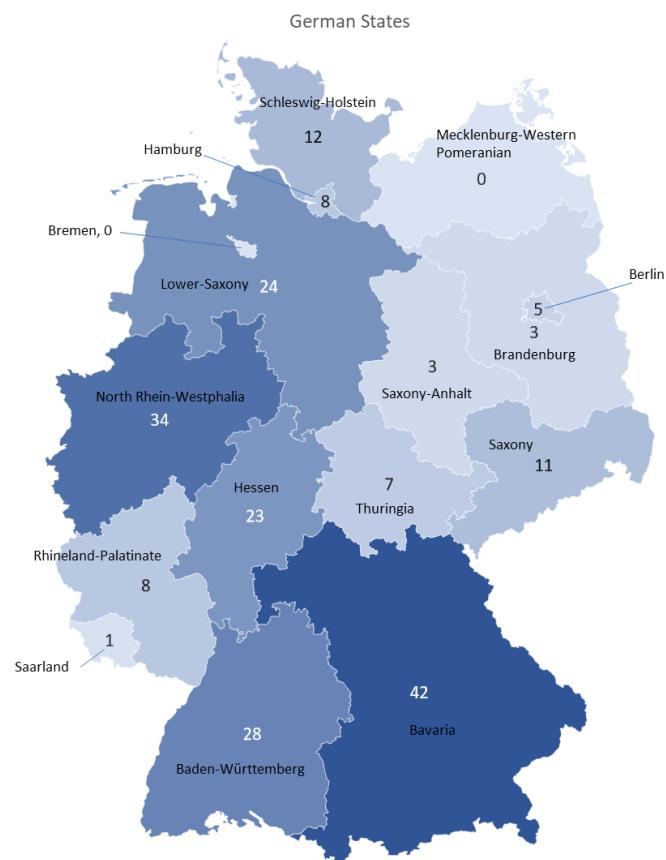


Figure 3. Map of German States with frequencies.

Zillinger et al. (2018) studied German tourists in Sweden and discovered that the highest number of German tourists came from Northern and Western parts of Germany. The results are rather similar especially with the Western parts. In Sweden the significant factor to travel there is the distance and easiness to travel with own car from Germany to Sweden. Southern and western parts are well presented most probably due the big airports, which are locating in Frankfurt in province of Hessen and in Munich in Bavaria.

4.2 Background information of traveling in Finland and North Karelia

To discover respondents (n=209) background information of traveling habits, they were asked first if they have already visited Finland (see table 6). 92,80 % of them had visited Finland at least once. Only 7,20 % had not been in Finland before. Those who have visited Finland (n=194), 10 % of them had been Finland once. 35,1 % of them had visited Finland 2-5 times. Even 54,1 % had visited Finland more than five times. In addition, 46,4 % of respondents had visited North Karelia once or several times and rest of them (53,6 %) never. Already at this point can be stated that this group of people were highly interested in Finland and had been there several times.

Of the 194 respondents, who had visited Finland before, 61,8 % of them arrived by plane. 36,1 % came with ship and only 2,1 % arrived to Finland by land, meaning by car, train, bus, motorcycle or another vehicle. These options were simplified to get the common understanding, which is the most usual transportation mode to arrive to Finland from Germany. Those who had visited North Karelia once or several times (n=97), arrived most likely with car (76,3 %) including campers and mobile homes. 19,6 % arrived to destination by plane. Train and bus were then most popular transportation modes with both having 7,2 %. Rest 3,1 % of the respondents answered the combination of car and plane or motorcycle. Respondents had possibility to choose several options, which in total gain 110 responses. These answering options were chosen based on the hypothesis that the Germans have already arrived to Finland, for example to Helsinki and then they continue their journey to North Karelia.

	Count	Frequency		Count	Frequency
Have you been in Finland? (n=209)			How did you arrive to Finland? (n=194)		
Yes	194	92,8 %	By air	120	61,8 %
No	15	7,2 %	By sea	70	36,1 %
			By land	4	2,1 %
How many times have you been in Finland? (n=194)			How did you arrive to North Karelia? (n=110)		
Once	21	10,8 %	By plane	19	19,6 %
2–5 times	68	35,1 %	By car	74	76,3 %
more than 5 times	105	54,1 %	By train	7	7,2 %
Have you been in North Karelia? (n=209)			By bus	7	7,2 %
Yes	97	46,4 %	Other	3	3,1 %
No	112	53,6 %			
With whom you were traveling with? (n=194)			How many times you travel abroad per year? (In normal occasion without Covid-19) (n=209)		
Alone	45	23,2 %	Less than once per year	16	17,6 %
With family	71	36,6 %	Once a year	62	29,7 %
With partner	44	22,7 %	Two or three times a year	94	45,0 %
With group	8	4,1 %	More than three times a year	37	17,7 %
With friend(s)/relative(s)	26	13,4 %			

Table 6. Respondents' traveling background in Finland and North Karelia.

Those who had visited Finland (n=194), were asked, with whom they travelled with. 36,6 % of them travelled with family, 23,2 % alone, 22,7 % with partner, 13,4 % with friends or relatives and 4,1 % with a group. It was also asked, how many times respondents (n=209) usually travel abroad per year in the case, that Covid-19 does not have impact on traveling opportunities. 45 % of the respondents travel two or three times per year abroad, 29,7 % once a year, 17,7 % more than three times a year and 17,6 % less than once a year. The specific details of other travels were not asked in this survey. However, the results show that this group of Germans are very active travelers and traveling most likely with their family as it was mentioned in the previous

chapter. In the following chapter will be discussed more closely what kind of image Germans' have about North Karelia and how potentially they would travel to the region.

4.3 North Karelia potential

Respondents were asked to write down three words that comes their mind when hearing or reading words “North Karelia”. The purpose of this question was to find out what kind of images and thoughts respondents have already about the area, no matter if they are familiar with the topic or not. In total 263 different words (see Figure 4) were mentioned also including some conjunctions and pronouns. However, there were lots of words with the same meaning but only the spelling was different, for instance singular and plural versions. In addition, for example “Piroggen”, “piirakka”, “karjalanpiirakka”, “karellischenpiroggen” and “pies” are all meaning the same, Karelian pies. The whole list of the mentioned words in their original form with English translations is attached in the end of this paper (see Appendix 5).



Figure 4. Word Cloud – Image of North Karelia.

The most mentioned words were **Natur** (=nature; 51), **Seen** (=lakes; 36), **Piroggen** (=Karelian pies; 35), **Russland** (=Russia; 33), **Wald** (=forest; 32), **Koli** (30), **Ruhe** (=calmness; 18), **Joensuu** (=16), **karelische** (=Karelian; 16), **Landschaft** (=landscape; 15), **Schnee** (=snow; 14), **Finnland** (=Finland; 13) and **Pielinen** (=Lake Pielinen; 12). The plural version of forest and singular versions of lakes, Karelian pies and borders of Russia were then mentioned. Also, **Weite** (=distance/largeness; 9), **Bären** (=bears; 8), **Rentiere** (=reindeer; 7) and **Essen** (=food; 6) reached significant number of mentions. Rest of the words were mentioned only 1-5 times.

It can be seen that most of the words are in a way, or another related to nature, location and Karelian food culture. There are also some words that are not related to North Karelia, for instance **Rautavaara**, **Savitaipale**, **Inarisee** (=Lake Inari), **Kainuu**, **Savonlinna** and **Tundra**. All of these not related words were mentioned only once and many of them are located in neighboring provinces.

After that image question, respondents were asked to analyze their knowledge of North Karelia as a region. Five statements were presented (see table 7) and each of them described different level of knowledge. Also, the map of North Karelia was attached to the question to give more information about the actual location and to help respondents to connect their knowledge into right region.

Statement (n=209)	Count	Frequency
I have visited North Karelia several times.	55	26,3 %
I have visited North Karelia once.	42	20,1 %
I have not visited North Karelia, but I know something about region's services and places.	18	8,6 %
I have not visited North Karelia, but I know that it locates in Eastern Finland.	77	36,9 %
I have not visited North Karelia and I know nothing about it.	17	8,1 %

Table 7. Respondents' knowledge of North Karelia as a region.

As were mentioned already earlier in the beginning of the chapter, 46,4 % of respondents have already visited North Karelia at least once. 8,6 % stated that they have not visited North Karelia, but they know something about the region's services and places. Even 36,9 % answered that they have not been in North Karelia, but they know that it locates in Eastern Finland. 8,1 % of respondents have not been in North Karelia and stated that they know nothing about the region. The profiles on North Karelia visitors and non-visitors were analyzed further (see table 8). In total, 97 of respondents have visited North Karelia before. Most of the visitors were female (n=68) but still 59 % of female respondents have not been in North Karelia. 28 out of 97 respondents were males who had visited North Karelia. According to the results, 31,7 % of males have not been in North Karelia before. Other genders were divided fifty-fifty having one respondent in both categories.

Demographics	Have you visited North Karelia?			
	Yes (n=97)		No (n=112)	
	Count	Frequency	Count	Frequency
Gender				
Male	28	68.3 %	13	31.7 %
Female	68	41.0 %	98	59.0 %
Other	1	50.0 %	1	50.0 %
Age groups				
25 years old or younger	4	36.4 %	7	63.6 %
26-39 years old	20	32.8 %	41	67.2 %
40-59 years old	64	53.8 %	55	46.2 %
60-64 years old	5	50.0 %	5	50.0 %
65 years old or older	4	50.0 %	4	50.0 %
Income level				
Below the average	39	43.8 %	50	56.2 %
Average	28	43.1 %	37	56.9 %
Above the average	30	54.5 %	25	45.5 %
Family				
Single without kids	15	28,30 %	38	71,70 %
Single with kids	4	50,00 %	4	50,00 %
In relationship without kids	30	46,20 %	35	53,80 %
In relationship with kids	48	57,80 %	35	42,20 %

Table 8. Demographic profiles of North Karelia visitors and non-visitors.

The frequencies of age groups were divided as follows: most of the visitors were 40-59 years old (66,0 %) and the second biggest age group was 26-39 years old (20,6 %). Three other age groups were represented with lower frequencies. 5,2 % of respondents who had visited North Karelia were 60-64 years old and. 25 years old or younger (4,1 %) and 65 years old or older (4,1 %) were the least visited age groups. These results are in balance with all of the respondents' demographic profile and there are no significant differences. Income levels were divided rather even. When North Karelia visitors and non-visitors are compared, it can be stated that those whose income is above the average are more eager to visit North Karelia and vice versa. But when comparing only those, who have visited North Karelia, the biggest respondent group's income level was below the average (40,2 %). Above the average (30,9 %) and average (28,9 %) followed.

The North Karelia visitors were most likely in relationship and had kids (49,5 %) and the second biggest group were in relationship without kids (30,9 %). Single without kids were the third group (15,5 %) and the last group was single with kids (4,1 %). For non-visitors the most likely family situation was single without kids (33,9 %). The following groups were relationship with and without kids where both having 31,2 % and the last group was single with kids (3,6 %).

They were also asked; how likely they would travel to Finland and especially to North Karelia within the next year and in case that Covid-19 does not have impact on situation (see table 9). 54,1 % would travel certainly, 41,6 % possibly and 4,3 % unlikely. There was also an option "absolutely not", but no one answered that. The results show that Germans are very eager to travel to Finland and North Karelia and they are already familiar with the region at least on the level, where it locates.

Likelihood to travel Finland or North Karelia within the next two years (n=209)			Booking method (n=209)		
	Count	Frequency		Count	Frequency
Certainly	113	54,1 %	I would make all the bookings by myself.	165	79,0 %
Possibly	87	41,6 %	I would book a trip through a travel agent.	13	6,2 %
Unlikely	9	4,3 %	I would book partly by myself and partly through a travel agent.	31	14,8 %
Transportation mode, if traveling to North Karelia (n=237)			Traveling companion, if traveling to North Karelia (n=209)		
By plane	67	32,1 %	Alone	28	13,4 %
By car	123	58,9 %	With family	72	34,4 %
By train	32	15,3 %	With partner	76	36,4 %
By bus	8	3,8 %	With group	4	1,9 %
Other	7	3,3 %	With friend(s)/relative(s)	29	13,9 %

Table 9. Respondents' traveling potential to North Karelia.

Respondents were asked to consider how they would book their trip if they were planning a holiday in North Karelia. 79,0 % of respondents would do all booking by themselves. On the contrary, 6,2 % would book everything via travel agency. 14,8 % of them would book their trip partly own their own and partly via travel agency. These results are showing the opposite comparing to Zillinger et al. (2018) study about German tourists in Sweden. They discovered that 92 % of all packaged tours are booked through a tour operator. However, it is worthwhile to notice that the question setting is a bit different. These results show that Germans are favoring more booking themselves, but it does not tell whether they are booking packaged tours or everything separately.

In table 9 is also presented, which transportation mode and traveling companion Germans would prefer when traveling to North Karelia. They had opportunity to choose several options. In total, there were 237 answers and over half of them (58,9 %) would travel to North Karelia by car.

32,1 % would arrive by plane, 15,3 % by train, 3,8 % by bus and rest of the respondents (3,3 %) chose other option. There were mentioned a combination of plane and car, a ship and car and motorcycle. What comes to traveling companion, 36,4 % would travel to North Karelia with partner and 34,4 % with family. 13,9 % of respondents would travel with friends or relatives, 13,4 % alone and only 1,9 % with a group.

As Russia and the close location of it were mentioned several times, author decided to take a closer look whether it has a positive or negative meaning to respondents (see table 10). In total Russia or the closeness of the border was mentioned in 48 comments. Rest of the comments (161) did not have any connection related to Russia.

	Would certainly visit North Karelia		Would possibly/unlikely visit North Karelia		Count	Frequency
	Count	Frequency	Count	Frequency		
Nothing Russia related in comments	91	57,0 %	70	43,0 %		
Russia mentioned in comments	22	45,8 %	26	54,2 %		

Table 10. Russia connection compared with willingness to travel to North Karelia.

From those who mentioned Russia 45,8 % would certainly visit North Karelia within the next two years and 54,2 % would visit possibly or unlikely. Responses without Russian connection were more eager to visit North Karelia, as 57,0 % would certainly visit destination and 43,0 % would visit possibly or unlikely North Karelia. Based on these results, there are no significant differences between these two groups, and it would be necessary to make deeper analyzations. In the following chapter the usage of different information channels will be examined more detailed to discover how Germans are searching for information about a destination.

4.4 Information channels

Information channels were divided into two different groups – to online channels and traditional channels. In the survey, respondents had to analyze how actively they are using different channels, when they are searching for information about a certain destination. 5-point Likert-scale was used to estimate the activity. The options were never (1), not so actively (2), neutral (3), actively (4) and very actively (5). The information channels were examined to find out, which channels would be the most profitable for marketers especially for VisitKarelia and which channels Germans are using most actively.

Firstly, online information channels were examined. 10 different online channels were listed: Facebook page of a destination, travel related Facebook groups, Instagram account of a destination, YouTube channel of a destination, Twitter account of a destination, TikTok, TripAdvisor, booking.com, official web page of a destination and newsletter. Also, they had a chance to add channels, if they are using some other channels, which were not mentioned. In table 11 are presented how actively different channels are used. In total, the most actively used online channels by mean value were official web page of a destination (4,1), Booking.com (3,3) and Instagram account of a destination (3,0). The following channels were Facebook page of a destination (2,9), travel related Facebook groups (2,7) and TripAdvisor (2,7). The not so actively used channels were newsletters (2,4) and YouTube channel of a destination (2,3). The least actively used channels were Twitter account of a destination (1,3) and TikTok (1,2). In addition, few other channels (2,0) were mentioned, which were following: Wikipedia, brochures, information from Google Maps, FeWo, which is an abbreviation of word **Ferienwohnung** (=holiday home), and blogs related to Finland.

Online channels	Age groups					F-test	p-value
	25 years old or younger (n=11)	25-39 years old (n=61)	40-59 years old (n=119)	60-64 years old (n=10)	65 years old or older (n=8)		
Facebook page of a destination							
Mean	2.9	3.4	2.9	2.8	2.8	3.8	
Std. deviation		0.81	1.18	1.23	1.23	0.71	1.6 0.175
Travel related Facebook groups							
Mean	2.7	2.5	2.6	2.7	3.0	3.3	
Std. deviation		1.37	1.22	1.28	1.15	1.04	0.8 0.541
Instagram account of a destination							
Mean	3.0	4.2	3.1	3.0	2.6	1.3	
Std. deviation		0.60	1.41	1.35	1.35	0.46	6.0 0.000
YouTube channel of a destination							
Mean	2.3	2.1	2.5	2.2	2.7	1.8	
Std. deviation		1.22	1.15	1.03	1.16	1.39	1.5 0.211
Twitter account of a destination							
Mean	1.3	1.2	1.1	1.3	1.6	1.3	
Std. deviation		0.60	0.36	0.67	0.84	0.46	1.6 0.174
TikTok							
Mean	1.2	2.1	1.2	1.1	1.0	1.3	
Std. deviation		1.70	0.45	0.45	0.00	0.71	7.4 0.000
TripAdvisor							
Mean	2.7	3.3	2.8	2.6	2.3	2.1	
Std. deviation		1.10	1.26	1.20	1.34	1.46	1.4 0.241
Booking.com							
Mean	3.3	3.6	3.6	3.1	3.7	2.3	
Std. deviation		1.36	0.99	1.34	1.25	1.39	3.3 0.011
Official web page of a destination							
Mean	4.1	4.4	4.1	4.1	4.1	3.4	
Std. deviation		0.67	0.77	0.83	0.99	1.06	1.9 0.108
Newsletter							
Mean	2.4	2.0	1.9	2.6	3.2	2.8	
Std. deviation		1.26	0.97	1.01	1.03	1.28	6.6 0.000
Other online channels							
Mean	2.0	1.9	2.0	2.0	2.1	2.1	
Std. deviation		1.45	1.32	1.36	1.20	1.55	0.1 0.994

Table 11. Usage of online channels between different age groups.

Statistically the most significant differences between the age groups and active use of online channels were with Instagram (p-value=0.000), TikTok (p-value=0.000), Booking.com (p-value=0.011) and newsletters (p-value=0.000). Instagram was the most actively used on age group 25 years old or younger (mean 4,2). The older people get the lower the usage rate was. 65 years old and older had only the mean score of 1,3. In general, TikTok was not in active use within any age group (mean 1,2) but the most active users were 25 years old and younger (2,1). Other age groups rated TikTok from 1,0 to 1,3. Booking.com was the second actively used online channel (mean 3,3) where 60-64 years old were the most active users (3,7), 25 years old and younger (3,6) and 26-39 years old (3,6) followed after. 40-59 years old had the mean score of 3,1 and 65 years old and older had the lowest rate (2,3). Newsletter was not so actively used online channel (2,4). The most active users were 60-64 years old (3,2), 65+ years old (2,8) and 40-59 years old (2,6). The younger age groups rated newsletter around 2,0. Other online channels were distributed rather even and there were no significant statistical differences between the age groups.

Secondly, the traditional information channels were studied. The activity of following channels was measured: guidebooks, brochures, journals, magazines, travel agency, maps, TV, friends and relatives and own experiences. Also, on this question the respondents had opportunity to add other traditional channels they are using actively. The table 12 presents, which traditional channels were used more actively among Germans when they are looking for information about a destination.

Traditional channels	Age groups					F-test	p-value
	25 years old or younger (n=11)	25-39 years old (n=61)	40-59 years old (n=119)	60-64 years old (n=10)	64 years old or older (n=8)		
Guidebooks							
Mean	3.5	3.3	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.3	
Std. deviation		1.19	1.12	1.09	0.70	1.04	0.3 0.891
Brochures							
Mean	3.1	2.1	3.2	3.1	3.1	3.0	
Std. deviation		1.30	1.10	1.12	0.74	1.07	2.5 0.044
Journals							
Mean	2.4	1.7	2.0	2.5	3.0	2.9	
Std. deviation		0.79	0.99	1.11	0.67	1.46	4.6 0.001
Magazines							
Mean	2.6	2.2	2.3	2.7	2.6	2.8	
Std. deviation		1.17	1.04	1.10	0.84	0.89	1.8 0.128
Travel agency							
Mean	1.9	1.6	1.8	1.9	2.0	1.9	
Std. deviation		0.92	1.10	1.03	0.94	0.83	0.3 0.853
Maps							
Mean	3.4	2.5	3.3	3.5	3.7	3.8	
Std. deviation		1.13	1.12	1.12	1.06	0.89	2.4 0.051
TV							
Mean	2.9	2.7	2.9	2.9	3.5	2.8	
Std. deviation		1.03	1.05	1.09	0.85	1.16	1.5 0.193
Friends/relatives							
Mean	3.6	4.2	3.7	3.5	3.4	3.0	
Std. deviation		0.75	0.94	1.06	1.26	1.07	1.9 0.111
Own experience							
Mean	4.1	4.1	4.0	4.1	4.3	4.3	
Std. deviation		0.83	0.91	0.83	0.67	0.71	0.4 0.822
Other traditional channels							
Mean	1.7	1.8	1.4	1.7	1.9	2.0	
Std. deviation		1.33	0.82	1.14	0.99	1.41	1.4 0.230

Table 12. Usage of traditional channels between different age groups.

The results show that in total the most actively used traditional information channels were own experience (4,1), WOM from friends and relatives (3,6), guidebooks (3,5) and maps (3,4). The following channels were brochures (3,1), TV (2,9), magazines (2,6) and journals (2,4). Travel agency (1,9) was used the least. Other mentioned traditional information channels (1,7) were university, asking information from local people and radio.

Statistically the most significant traditional information channels between different age groups were brochures (p-value=0.044), journals (p-value=0.001) and maps (p-value=0.051). The most active users of brochures were 26-39 years old (3,2) followed by older age groups with mean scores from 3,00 to 3,2. The least active users were 25 years old and younger with 2,1. Journals were most used by 60-64 years old (3,0) and the age group of 65+ (2,9). 40-59 years old were on third place (2,5) and 26-39 years old were following with 2,0. Also, with journals, the least active users were 25 years old and younger (1,7). The most active users of maps were 65 years old and older (3,8) and 60-64 years old (3,7). 40-59 years old (3,5) and 26-39 years old (3,3) followed after. 25 years old and younger kept the last place with 2,5.

4.5 Attributes

Based on the previous studies (ReiseAnalyse, 2021b; Pesonen & Komppula, 2010) a list of attributes was modified (see table 13). The results will help VisitKarelia to focus their marketing on certain attributes and also help local entrepreneurs to enhance their marketing. 5-point Likert scale was used to measure the attractiveness of different attributes in a destination. The alternatives were not at all attractive (1), not very attractive (2), neutral (3), attractive (4) and very attractive (5). The location was not specified in the question but all of the attributes present North Karelia and can be found from the region.

Attributes	Age groups						F-test	p-value
	25 years old or younger (n=11)	25-39 years old (n=61)	40-59 years old (n=119)	60-64 years old (n=10)	64 years old or older(n=8)			
Unspoiled nature								
Mean	4.6	4.5	4.7	4.6	4.6		4.1	
Std. deviation		0.52	0.48	0.60	0.70		0.83	1.6 0.171
Location close to a lake								
Mean	4.7	4.6	4.8	4.7	4.5		4.5	
Std. deviation		0.67	0.43	0.49	0.71		0.53	1.0 0.424
Midnight sun								
Mean	4.6	4.5	4.5	4.6	4.6		4.8	
Std. deviation		0.69	0.77	0.65	0.52		0.46	0.4 0.805
Forests								
Mean	4.6	4.5	4.7	4.5	4.6		4.5	
Std. deviation		0.52	0.54	0.62	0.52		0.53	0.5 0.732
Rural settings								
Mean	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.1		4.3	
Std. deviation		0.87	0.81	0.74	0.99		0.89	0.1 0.985
National parks								
Mean	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.4		4.3	
Std. deviation		0.81	0.67	0.62	0.97		0.71	0.2 0.955
Finnish sauna								
Mean	4.2	4.1	4.3	4.2	4.1		4.3	
Std. deviation		1.14	1.06	1.05	0.88		0.89	0.1 0.981
Local culture								
Mean	4.4	4.1	4.5	4.4	4.5		4.1	
Std. deviation		1.14	0.56	0.67	0.71		0.35	1.7 0.147
Local food								
Mean	4.4	3.8	4.3	4.5	4.5		4.1	
Std. deviation		1.33	0.81	0.71	0.53		0.83	2.3 0.064
Northern lights								
Mean	4.7	4.8	4.8	4.7	4.5		4.6	
Std. deviation		0.40	0.56	0.58	0.71		1.06	0.9 0.447
Cottage holiday								
Mean	4.3	4.4	4.2	4.3	3.9		4.4	
Std. deviation		1.21	0.83	0.92	1.29		0.92	0.5 0.762
Special accommodation								
Mean	3.7	4.3	3.8	3.7	3.0		3.5	
Std. deviation		1.35	0.92	1.10	1.05		1.20	2.2 0.069
Relaxation								
Mean	4.4	4.3	4.2	4.4	4.3		4.6	
Std. deviation		0.79	0.89	0.74	0.82		0.52	0.9 0.487
Meditation								
Mean	2.6	2.5	2.8	2.6	2.7		2.8	
Std. deviation		1.44	1.26	1.15	1.16		1.04	0.5 0.755
Luxurious experiences								
Mean	2.4	2.2	2.5	2.4	2.1		2.9	
Std. deviation		0.75	1.15	1.16	0.88		1.46	0.8 0.523

Table 13. Attractivity of different attributes between age groups.

Especially location close to a lake (4,7) and northern lights (4,7) were the most attractive attributes for Germans in total. The following attributes were unspoiled nature (4,6), midnight sun (4,6) and forests (4,6). After that the most attractive attributes were national parks (4,4), local culture (4,4), local food (4,4) and relaxation (4,4). Rural settings (4,2) and Finnish sauna (4,2) followed the list. The least attractive attributes for Germans were special accommodation (3,7), meditation (2,6) and luxurious experiences (2,4). The results show that Germans are favoring attributes related to nature and its pureness. Exceptional natural phenomena are highly valued. Akgün, Senturk, Keskin and Onal (2020) discovered that Germans are also interested in art, gastronomy, culture and heritage. This study supports the findings as the local culture and local food are attractive attributes.

Statistically there were no significant differences between the age groups and attributes. It can be stated that almost all the attributes were highly attractive as most of the attributes got the mean score over 4,0. Only special accommodation, meditation and luxurious experiences were below. There were two attributes that were close to a statistical significance (p-value <.005). Those attributes were local food (p-value=0.064) and special accommodation (p-value=0.069). Local food was the most attractive attribute among 60-64 years old (4,5) and 40-59 years old (4,5). It was the least attractive to 25 years old and younger (3,8). But still, the differences are not so significant as all age groups rated it rather high. Special accommodation was the most attractive to the youngest age group (4,3). For the 60-64 years old it was not so important (3,0) as it got the last place. Other age groups were between 3,5 and 3,8.

As many of the respondents were already visited North Karelia once or several times, author decided to explore, if there are any significant differences between the visitors and non-visitors how they value the attributes (see table 14). Statistical significance was discovered between five different attributes and visiting times in North Karelia and knowledge about the region. The attributes were following: forests (p-value=0.047), rural settings (p-value=0.025), Finnish sauna (p-value=0.000), Northern lights (p-value=0.003) and special accommodation (p-value=0.000).

Attributes	Have visited North Karelia (n=97)	Have not visited North Karelia but knows something about the region (n=95)	Have not visited North Karelia and knows nothing about it (n=17)	F-test	p-value
Unspoiled nature					
Mean	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.5	
Std.deviation		0.58	0.59	0.62	0.3 0.715
Location close to a lake					
Mean	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.6	
Std.deviation		0.51	0.47	0.62	0.7 0.499
Midnight sun					
Mean	4.6	4.6	4.5	4.4	
Std.deviation		0.63	0.71	0.72	0.2 0.806
Forests					
Mean	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.2	
Std.deviation		0.55	0.56	0.83	3.1 0.047
Rural settings					
Mean	4.2	4.4	4.1	4.0	
Std.deviation		0.71	0.81	0.87	3.8 0.025
National Parks					
Mean	4.4	4.5	4.4	4.3	
Std.deviation		0.63	0.70	0.59	0.5 0.597
Finnish sauna					
Mean	4.2	4.6	3.9	4.1	
Std.deviation		0.75	1.16	1.05	13.2 0.000
Local culture					
Mean	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.5	
Std.deviation		0.66	0.71	0.51	0.4 0.676
Local food					
Mean	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.4	
Std.deviation		0.83	0.78	0.62	0.3 0.724
Northern lights					
Mean	4.7	4.6	4.9	4.9	
Std.deviation		0.73	0.40	0.39	6.1 0.003
Cottage holiday					
Mean	4.3	4.3	4.2	4.3	
Std.deviation		0.91	0.98	0.77	0.0 0.954
Special accommodation					
Mean	3.7	3.4	4.0	4.1	
Std.deviation		1.13	0.97	0.78	8.8 0.000
Relaxation					
Mean	4.4	4.4	4.3	4.2	
Std.deviation		0.76	0.82	0.73	0.9 0.424
Meditation					
Mean	2.6	2.5	2.7	2.9	
Std.deviation		1.10	1.26	1.32	1.3 0.278
Luxurious experiences					
Mean	2.4	2.3	2.5	2.7	
Std.deviation		1.17	1.07	1.31	1.0 0.376

Table 14. Attributes compared to visiting times in North Karelia.

Those who have visited North Karelia once or several times and the non-visitors but having some knowledge about the region valued forests the most attractive (4,6). The non-visitors having no knowledge about the region were following (4,2). Rural settings were most attractive for North Karelia visitors (4,4). Second group valued it 4,1 and the last group as 4,0. Also, Finnish sauna was the most attractive attribute for visitors (4,6). Those with no knowledge of the region valued it the second highest (4,1) and those with some knowledge followed (3,9). Northern lights were highly attractive for each group. Group with some knowledge valued it the highest (4,9), group with no knowledge following (4,8). The visitors valued it lowest (4,6). Special accommodation was the most attractive for those who have no knowledge (4,1), secondly for those who have some knowledge of the region (4,0) and lastly for visitors (3,4).

4.6 Marketing communication

Respondents were asked about marketing communication, and which issues they find the most important in communication. It was not specified, where the information is mentioned but in general, what kind of statements they find useful and important, when they are looking for information about a destination. 5-point Likert-scale was used to measure the importance of marketing communication statements. The alternatives were not at all important (1), not very important (2), neutral (3), important (4) and very important (5). The statements are based on previous studies and VisitKarelia's interests. These results will be helpful especially for VisitKarelia when they are planning marketing to German market. The statements and results between different age groups are presented in the following table (see table 15).

Marketing communication	Age groups						F-test	p-value
	25 years old or younger (n=11)	25-39 years old (n=61)	40-59 years old (n=119)	60-64 years old (n=10)	64 years old or older (n=8)			
The information is available in German								
Mean	3.3	3.2	3.2	3.4	3.8	3.3		
Std. deviation		1.17	1.15	1.06	1.03	1.16	0.6	0.636
There are more pictures than text								
Mean	3.2	3.4	3.2	3.2	2.9	3.1		
Std. deviation		0.92	0.70	0.89	0.57	0.83	0.5	0.737
Emotional messages have been used								
Mean	2.9	2.9	2.9	3.0	2.7	3.1		
Std. deviation		0.83	0.77	0.90	1.34	0.83	0.4	0.802
There are sustainable products/services available								
Mean	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.6	3.8	3.5		
Std. deviation		0.81	0.77	0.87	0.79	1.07	0.2	0.957
Accommodation has an ecolabel or other certificate of sustainability								
Mean	3.4	3.2	3.3	3.5	3.8	2.8		
Std. deviation		1.08	0.77	0.89	0.92	1.16	1.9	0.104
It is possible to book accommodation online								
Mean	4.5	4.6	4.5	4.5	4.3	3.4		
Std. deviation		0.50	0.72	0.67	0.82	1.51	4.9	0.001
It is possible to book activities online								
Mean	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.0	3.1		
Std. deviation		0.60	0.91	0.95	1.05	1.13	2.4	0.048
There is tailor made packages available								
Mean	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.4	2.8		
Std. deviation		1.22	1.01	1.08	1.17	1.04	0.4	0.799
There is a map available to see the location								
Mean	4.3	3.8	4.2	4.3	4.7	3.9		
Std. deviation		1.25	0.85	0.72	0.48	0.64	2.5	0.046
There is information about distances, for instance how far North Karelia is from Helsinki								
Mean	3.7	4.1	3.8	3.6	3.9	3.3		
Std. deviation		1.04	0.98	0.98	0.74	1.39	1.3	0.276
There is information how to reach the destination								
Mean	4.2	4.5	4.3	4.2	4.3	3.3		
Std. deviation		0.69	0.76	0.78	1.16	1.39	3.2	0.013

Table 15. The importance of various statements in marketing communication between age groups.

In general, the most important statements were that it is possible to book accommodation online (4,5), there is a map available to see the location (4,3), there is information how to reach the destination (4,2) and it is possible to book activities online (4,1). All of these factors are necessary especially when planning a trip and making it more comfortable and easier before trip. The following attributes were that there is information about distances (3,7), there are sustainable products and services available (3,6), accommodation has an ecolabel or other certificate of sustainability (3,4), and that the information is available in German (3,3). The least important things in marketing communication were that there are more pictures than text (3,2), there is tailor made packages available (3,1) and that emotional messages have been used (3,1).

Statistically significant marketing communication statements compared with different age groups were possibility to book accommodation online ($p\text{-value}=0.001$), possibility to book activities online ($p\text{-value}=0.048$), there is map available to see the location ($p\text{-value}=0.46$) and there is information how to reach the destination ($p\text{-value}=0.013$). The possibility to book accommodation online was the most important to 25 years old and younger (4,6), 40-59 years old (4,5) and 26-39 years old (4,5). The age group 60-64 years old followed (4,3) and the least important it was for 65+ (3,4). Also, possibility to book activities online followed rather similar path as the previous one. The youngest age groups found it the most important (4,0-4,2) and the oldest age group had the lowest importance rate (3,1).

Having the map of location was the most important for 60-64 years old (4,7). 40-59 years old (4,3) and 26-39 years old (4,2) followed. It was the least important to 65 years old and older (3,9) and to 25 years old and younger (3,8). The information how to reach the destination was important to other age groups (4,2-4,5) than 65+ (3,3).

Tölkes (2018a) stated that it is worthwhile to study further the meaning of sustainable communication from the perspective of demographics e.g., age, gender, level of education and income level. Meaning of sustainability was also one of the main questions of this master's thesis, so statements there are sustainable products/services available, and accommodation has an eco-label or other certificate of sustainability were examined more closely from the perspective of

age, gender and income to see, if there are any significant differences between these factors (see table 16 and table 15, where age groups were already investigated).

Sustainable marketing communication	Gender					Income				
	Male (n=41)	Female (n=166)	Other (n=2)	F- test	p- value	Below the average (n=89)	Ave- rage (n=65)	Above the average (n=55)	F- test	p- value
There are sustainable products/services available										
Mean	3.6	3.8	3.6	4.5		3.6	3.6	3.5	3.8	
Std. Deviation	0.81	0.84	0.71	2.2	0.110	0.82	0.85	0.84	1.9	0.159
Accommodation has an ecolabel or other certificate of sustainability										
Mean	3.4	3.5	3.3	5.0		3.4	3.3	3.4	3.5	
Std. Deviation	1.03	0.84	0.00	4.2	0.016	0.87	0.86	0.96	0.6	0.526

Table 16. Sustainability in marketing communication compared with gender and income.

In general, there are significantly more female respondents as male respondents but statistically the results are not significant in first statement. However, the mean value of males is higher (3,8) than females' (3,6). Other genders valued it the most important (4,5). The statement that accommodation has an ecolabel or other certificate of sustainability was statistically significant (p-value=0.016). Other genders found it the most important (5,0), male respondents the second (3,5) and females as third (3,3). As income levels were compared with sustainable statements there were not any statistical significance. The highest importance of having sustainable products and services was on the income above the average -group (3,8). Income levels of below the average (3,6) and average (3,5) followed. The similar results can be seen with the other statement, where those who are having higher income, valued the ecolabels and certificates the most important (3,5). Average (3,4) and below the average (3,3) were following.

The age groups were already compared in table 15. Also, there were not any statistical significance between different age groups. The age group of 60-64 valued both statements the most important (3,8). Age groups from 25 to 59 valued the first statement as 3,6 and the oldest age

group was on the last place (3,5). Ecolabels and certificates were the second important for 40-59 years old (3,5). 26-39 years old (3,3) and 25 years old and younger (3,2) followed after. Having an ecolabel or certificate was the least important for 65+ (2,8).

4.7 VisitKarelia

As a last question, VisitKarelia wanted to find out, what kind of image Germans have about the company or do they have opinions and knowledge at all. Respondents were asked to write down what comes to their mind when they see or hear word "VisitKarelia". In total 187 answered to this question at least with one or several words. All of the original answers with English translations are attached in the end of this master's thesis (see Appendix 4). With the analysis of Atlas.ti software, few concepts stood out clearly.

Karelien (=Karelia; 23), **Urlaub** (=holiday; 18), **Finnland** (=Finland; 17), **Natur** (=nature; 17), **Region** (14), **Information** (14) and **See** (=lake; 11) were mentioned the most often. Also, **Seite** (=website; 8), **Tourismus** (=tourism; 7), **Info** (7) and **Homepage** (6) got several mentions with above-mentioned words but also with synonyms, like marketing, websites and social media channels. Significantly, many of the respondents connected the name to tourism website or organization. However, they were not so familiar, which region they are marketing or representing.

Based on earlier studies of destination identity and image (Saraniemi, 2009; Mikkonen 2017; Beerli & Martin, 2004), the responses were divided into six different categories. The categories were modified as follows: 1) earlier experiences, 2) destination communication, 3) destination culture, 4) desire to experience new, 5) location and 6) unknown. The earlier experiences category includes one's values, meanings, expectations and feelings towards North Karelia and presents the own destination identity of a respondent (Saraniemi, 2009). Destination communication is related to sources of information like social media and web pages. In this study it principally means VisitKarelia's ways of communication. Destination culture includes all words and thoughts related to North Karelian culture, history, attractions and local food (Saraniemi, 2009). The fourth category is the desire to experience new and it includes future expectations and

thoughts towards North Karelia (Mikkonen, 2017). The fifth category is the location, and it includes anything related to location (Saraniemi, 2009; Beerli & Martin, 2004). The last category was set to replies, where the respondent does not have any previous knowledge about North Karelia or VisitKarelia. The frequencies of the categories are presented in table 17.

What comes to your mind when you hear or read the word "VisitKarelia?"		
Category	Count	Frequency
No answer	22	10,5 %
1) Earlier experiences	12	5,7 %
2) Destination communication	76	36,4 %
3) Destination culture	39	18,7 %
4) Desire to experience new	47	22,5 %
5) Location	7	3,3 %
6) Unknown word	6	2,9 %

Table 17. Categories of VisitKarelia's image.

In total, 187 replied to the open question concerning VisitKarelia. 22 respondents (10,5 %) left the question empty. The most common answer was related to destination communication (36,4 %). It was connected to web pages, social media, tourism and marketing. However, many of the respondents were not so familiar with the brand of VisitKarelia but connected it with Visit Finland and other similar named web pages. 22,5 % of the responses were filled with desire to experience new and the comments were positive towards traveling to the destination or made them interested to find out more about the context. 18,7 % of respondents were able to name some attributes connected to destination culture. For instance, Koli, Bomba, lakes and nature were mentioned often. 5,7 % of respondents based their answers on their own earlier experiences in Finland or North Karelia. The experiences were connected to earlier holiday memories, family members and knowledge about the region. 3,3 % answered only one word, which were related to location. For instance, couple answers highlighted that they are not sure whether VisitKarelia is marketing Finland or Russia. For 2,9 % of respondents VisitKarelia were not familiar at all and they could not mention anything about the topic. In the following table 18 the answers are compared with visiting times in North Karelia to see, if there are any differences between the groups.

What comes to your mind when you hear or read word VisitKarelia?	Have visited North Karelia once/several times (n=97)		Have not visited North Karelia but knows something about the region, at least that it locates in Eastern Finland (n=95)		Have not visited North Karelia and no nothing about it (n=17)	
	Count	Frequency	Count	Frequency	Count	Frequency
No answer	6	6,2 %	13	13,7 %	3	17,6 %
Earlier experience	10	10,3 %	2	2,1 %	0	0,0 %
Destination communication	36	37,1 %	36	37,9 %	4	23,5 %
Destination culture	23	23,7 %	15	15,8 %	1	5,9 %
Desire to experience new	17	17,5 %	24	25,3 %	6	35,3 %
Location	2	2,1 %	4	4,2 %	1	5,9 %
Unknown	3	3,1 %	1	1,1 %	2	11,8 %

Table 18. Knowledge about VisitKarelia compared to visiting times in North Karelia.

Those who have visited North Karelia once or several times connected VisitKarelia the most to destination communication (37,1 %) and destination culture (23,7 %). 17,5 % mentioned something related to desire to experience new and 10,3 % based their answers on earlier experiences. Naturally, these North Karelia visitors had the biggest frequency of earlier experience in answers. For 3,1 % of visitors VisitKarelia was unknown and 2,1 % of respondents connected it to location. 6,2 % of visitors did not answer on the question. Those who had not visited North Karelia, but they had some previous knowledge of North Karelia, or its location connected VisitKarelia as well the most to destination communication (37,9 %). 25,3 % mentioned desire to experience new and also destination culture was highlighted (15,8 %). Location was mentioned few times (4,2 %), 2,1 % based their answer on earlier experiences and for 1,1 % VisitKarelia was totally unknown. Even 13,7 % left the question empty.

Those who had not visited North Karelia and had no previous knowledge about the region connected VisitKarelia the most to desire to experience new (35,3 %) and to destination communication (23,5 %). For 11,8 % VisitKarelia was totally unknown word, destination culture (5,9 %) and location (5,9 %) was mentioned once. Naturally, no one based their answer on earlier experience and even 17,6 % did not answer on the question.

5 Conclusions and discussion

5.1 Discussion

To sum up, the aim of this quantitative study was to gain better understanding of German tourists as a marketing segment. The main research question of this master's thesis was how to communicate the image of North Karelia to German market. The sub questions were to discover, which information channels are the most important when choosing a destination, what German tourists know about North Karelia as region, how attractive German tourists find North Karelia and what is the meaning of sustainability when choosing a destination. Also, other main question, which interested VisitKarelia, was to find out, which transportation mode German tourists are favoring while traveling.

At first, according to the 209 responses, the profile of the most potential German tourist, who would travel to Finland or to North Karelia is a female, who is around 40-59 years old. Most likely she is in a relationship and has children. She is currently employed, rather highly educated and the income level is below the average. The residence is likely Southern or Western part of Germany and especially Bavaria or North Rhein-Westphalia. These results are replicating Zillinger et al. (2018) findings as they discovered that Germans are having rather high age profile where the median age was even 56 and also, they were well educated. Also, ReiseAnalyse (2021b) showed that one of the biggest age groups, which is interested to travel to Finland is 50-69 years old. Nordic Marketing together with VisitKarelia discovered as well that the most potential segments are families and couples, and they are employed (DMO VisitKarelia, 2021). The results support the earlier findings and justifies the main target group.

The first sub question was to find out, which information channels Germans are using most actively. To keep the survey clearer the channels were divided into online and traditional information channels. The most actively used online channels were official web page of a destination Booking.com and Instagram account of a destination. Also, Facebook page of a destination, travel related Facebook groups and TripAdvisor were rather high on the list. These findings are supporting Zillinger et al. (2018) and Zillinger (2020b) studies, as they founded out that German

tourist are most likely trusting on TripAdvisor and Booking.com rather than individual accommodation companies. However, it can be stated that individual accommodation companies were not taken into account on this study.

The most actively used traditional information channels were own experience, WOM from friends and relatives, guidebooks and maps. The following channels were brochures, TV, magazines, and journals. On the contrast to previous studies (Zillinger et al., 2018; Zillinger, 2020b; DMO VisitKarelia, 2021), these results show that travel agencies are not so popular and used among German tourists. However, the results support the earlier findings that own experience, WOM, guidebooks and brochures are keeping their popularity.

It is also good to mention that there were some significant differences between age groups and how actively they are using the information channels. Based on the results, to reach the most common and potential segment of Germans, which is 40-59 years old, the most useful online information channels for marketers are significantly official web page of a destination, Booking.com, Instagram account of a destination and Facebook page of a destination and other travel related Facebook groups. TripAdvisor and newsletters are following after. Of traditional channels the most profitable ways to reach the right audience is to benefit WOM, guidebooks and maps in addition to their own experiences.

Marketing communication statements were one of the questions to discover what kind of factors Germans find important, when searching information about a destination. The most important findings were that accommodation and activities has to be available online and there is possibility to book them in advance. This was highly rated among all the respondents except the age group of 65 years old and older. Also, it is rather necessary to have information how to reach the destination, how long the distances are between different locations and to see the map of the region. A bit surprisingly, having the information in German was not found as an important factor in marketing communication. Only the 60-64 years old rated it as an important statement. These results are giving contrast on earlier studies, as Zillinger et al. (2018) stated that information on homepages must be available also on German.

Respondents did not find emotional messages significant factor in communication. Earlier study stated that having emotional messages on marketing communication the destination image will be more positive (Rodríguez-Molina et al., 2015). German tourists did not rated emotional messages high on their list, but their overall image of North Karelia seemed to be rather positive. The connection between emotional messages and positive destination image could be studied more detailed in the future to ensure the relationship between these two factors. Also, the opinions were neutral when it comes to the statement having more pictures than text in marketing. Only 25 years old and younger rated it a bit higher than other age groups. These results are rather different compared with Zillinger et al. (2018) and Zillinger (2020b) as they discovered that text is not as relevant as having pictures on web pages to get the right feeling. However, on this study it was only asked with one statement, so it is difficult to make any clear conclusions of the topic.

As has been mentioned previously, many of these respondents seemed to be very familiar with Finland and visited it many times. Also, half of them were visited North Karelia before, so they had lots of own experience about the region but likely also knowledge about the services and places based on others' experiences and their own interests. The results showed that North Karelia is strongly connected to nature, lakes, forests and natural phenomena. In addition, especially Karelian pies and Karelian culture were well known among the respondents. These findings are well in balance with the earlier study by Nordic Marketing and VisitKarelia. According to them North Karelia was unknown for respondents. (DMO VisitKarelia, 2021) On the contrary, the sample of this master's thesis was surprisingly familiar with the destination.

The discovered attributes and connections to North Karelia were rather similar with Zillinger et al. (2018) and Jensen et al. (2015) who found that German tourists are mentioning most likely rural settings, unspoiled nature, natural phenomena and location close to a lake. These studies were made in Sweden and Norway, where the natural settings are very similar with Finland. Also, ReiseAnalyse (2021b) discovered that those Germans who already have an image of Finland mentioned most likely nature related attributes, lakes, cities, northern lights, sauna and intangible features like happiness and freedom. These can be seen also from respondents' open ended answers as own memorable experiences popped up several times and North Karelia were connected to natural surroundings. On the contrast to ReiseAnalyse (2021b), Santa Claus and special

accommodation were not mentioned and highlighted at all in this study. One significant reason might be that respondents were rather familiar with the region, and they are able to connect Santa Claus to Lapland and they have knowledge about North Karelian accommodation possibilities. To be mentioned, special accommodations are not very common in North Karelian region in year 2022. Few significant differences were discovered also between the North Karelia visitors and non-visitors as they rated Finnish sauna, forests, northern lights and rural settings differently. Those who had visited North Karelia before rated Finnish sauna higher than non-visitors. It shows, that visiting Finnish sauna is something that you can not describe to get the right feeling, but you have to experience it yourself. Also, the importance of forests and rural settings are definitely features that you need to see and feel personally to have some emotional connections on them. On the contrast, the non-visitors rated Northern lights the most attractive attribute and those who had visited North Karelia rated it rather attractive as well but there was a significant difference between the groups. It is possible that the visitors have not seen Northern lights when they have been in the region, and they are not expecting to see them either in the future. But these results are not giving enough information to make any conclusions of that connection.

Surprisingly, Russian and the nearness of Russian border were mentioned in several answers. Especially, some activities close to a border, historical events and location itself were connected both to North Karelia and VisitKarelia. However, these results did not reveal enough trustworthy information if the connections are positive or negative and if it has impact on choosing the destination. These results are all in all interesting to explore further in future studies.

What it comes to VisitKarelia, the respondents were not so familiar with the brand but most likely connected it into destination communication and other similar web sites as Visit Finland. It also raised willingness to experience something new and to discover what is behind the word. In this case as well, VisitKarelia was connected few times to Russia, and it was not clear if it is marketing Finland or Russia. For future studies this could be interesting aspect to discover how to enhance the brand image and visibility of VisitKarelia. Also, DMO VisitKarelia (2021) discovered that both the region and DMO have weak visibility and recognizability. However, these findings and results give better opportunities to enhance brand awareness.

Based on the results, North Karelia is attractive destination among German tourists. The willingness rate to travel to North Karelia within the next two years was high and only few percent of respondents were uncertainly choosing North Karelia to their holiday destination. Also, the open ended questions showed positive feelings and experiences towards the region. Nevertheless, it is good to remember that the target group of respondents were Finland enthusiasts and already rather familiar with the destination. All nature and Karelian culture related attributes were found highly attractive. Only special accommodation, luxurious experiences and meditation were rated lower. These findings support the fact that products and services in North Karelia are not focused on high-end services but in nature related outputs. As ReiseAnalyse (2021b) discovered, Germans' interest to travel to Finland has increased within the last two years and the most potential age groups are middle aged travelers and younger ones. The findings of this paper are supporting these results.

The meaning of sustainability was investigated in this study through two marketing communication statements. The results showed that males found sustainability more important than females. Also, those with higher income level rated sustainability more important than respondents with lower income level. The differences between age groups were not so significant. The age group of 60-64 years old found sustainability the most important and people over 65 least important. The other age groups were divided rather even. These results are giving contrast on earlier study of Cuculeski et al. (2016) as they stated that sustainability should be marketed the most on 26-35 years old. Both having sustainable products/services (3,6) and accommodation having certificate of sustainability (3,4) were rated between neutral and important. Unless Tiago et al. (2021) discovered, sustainability seems to be rather important factor when choosing an accommodation. The results also support findings of ReiseAnalyse (2021a) that the interest of sustainable holidays is increasing among German tourists as they want to travel away of mass tourism destinations. But as Tölkes (2018b) mentioned, travelers are not necessarily aware of different certificates and whether a company is having a one. This study did not focus on that aspect and could be interesting point of view for the future studies.

The last question was to discover, which transportation mode German tourists are favoring while traveling. According to the results, Germans are most likely arriving to Finland by plane and

secondly by ship. It is worthwhile to notice that big part of the respondents was from Southern and Western parts of German, from where it is naturally easier to arrive by plane. But when they are traveling in Finland and especially to North Karelia, the main transportation mode was by car. These findings are rather similar with Gross and Grimm (2018), who discovered that even 47 % of German travelers arrived to a destination by car, camper van or caravan in 2016. Similar survey was made in Sweden and also there Germans were most likely arriving by their own car (Zillinger et al., 2018). There was also quite high interest to arrive to North Karelia by plane (32,1 %). This is good information to know especially for local entrepreneurs and VisitKarelia to enhance the usage rate of local airport. However, it can be stated that this study did not reveal anything new related to transportation mode preferences.

In general, to sum up, German tourists are interested about nature related products and services which are possible to book online. It is also important that there is enough information available about the distances, how to arrive to a destination and maps to show the region. Information does not necessarily has to be in German, but it is rather important especially for older age groups. Sustainability is an interesting topic and important in marketing communication. However, the results do not tell enough, if it is significant factor when choosing a destination. In the following chapters the theoretical contributions and managerial implications will be discussed further.

5.2 Theoretical contribution

As the purpose of this study was to discover the destination image of North Karelia and how to communicate that to German market, the results support the theoretical part. The theoretical framework of this study can been seen in the Figure 1. The theoretical concepts were based on earlier studies and literature to get the big picture of destination competitiveness, destination identity, destination image and destination communication. Also, the destination communication was divided into three groups: communication channels, how to communicate and message to consumers (see Figure 2).

According to the results, the main finding was that Germans' image of North Karelia is strongly based on surrounding nature and natural elements of the region. The most actively used communication channels were discovered and based on the target group. Also, the results gave information, what kind of information German tourists want to have when choosing a destination. The results supported earlier findings of other studies but also gave some deeper analysis of the marketing segment. Destination competitiveness and the question how to get Germans to North Karelia was not that deeply analyzed and studied in this paper. However, destination identity and attributes and destination communication were investigated widely.

As this was mainly a market research of Germans, few significant differences were discovered if compared to earlier studies with similar topics. Especially, it was brought forth that Germans are not finding having information in German as an important factor as earlier study has shown (Zillinger et al., 2018). It was the most important to age group of 60-64 years old but other age groups stated it as a neutral factor. As Jacobsen and Munar (2021) stated that English is a lingua franca and used among tourism service providers it gives perspective, whether it will be a new trend that information in English is satisfying Germans and giving the necessary information they need. Also, younger generations may have better language skills and knowledge to work with. In this study, it is good to remember that respondents were already rather familiar with the destination, so there can be a connection between the destination, earlier knowledge and language preferences. If they already know facts about the destination it can have an impact on the factor that they do not require so much information in their own language. This topic could be worthwhile to study further in general.

Earlier studies have also highlighted that Germans are favoring travel agencies when booking a holiday (Zillinger, 2020b; ReiseAnalyse, 2021a; Gursoy et al., 2018). On the contrast, these results showed that Germans would book everything by themselves and only minority would do bookings through travel agent. Also, Business Finland (2019) stated that Germans most searched words concerned Finland were vacation packages. Unlike these findings, the results of this paper discovered that tailor made packages are not important factor for Germans. The clear contradictions can be seen in both cases. One significant factor might be that respondents were rather active travelers and familiar with Finland as a traveling destination, so they are more eager to

book everything on their own as they have knowledge about the region and its services. However, the results revealed that Germans are more actively moving to online channels and have willingness to book accommodation and activities online. This is an interesting feature also for local companies to enhance their online availability.

The third significant finding was the meaning of sustainability and how it was rated between the different groups. Sustainability is a growing trend and also UNWTO (2021b) stated that the importance of sustainability cannot be highlighted too much. As Gerdt et al. (2019) discovered that Germans are finding sustainable manners very important while also traveling the results of this study supported that. A bit surprisingly male respondents rated sustainability higher than females but differences between the age group were not significant unlike Cuculeski et al. (2016) discovered. The findings of general interest are also supported with earlier results of ReiseAnalyse (2021a) as they stated that German tourist have increasing interest towards sustainable services. These results are beneficial for VisitKarelia as one main part of their strategy is to increase sustainable products and services in North Karelia. Nevertheless, these findings need to be studied further to discover, what kind of messages are the most effective and useful for Germans to have an impact on destination choice. As Tölkes (2018b) brought forth, sustainability might be an important factor, but tourists are not aware of companies having a certificate or other sustainable services.

5.3 Managerial implications

One of the managerial implications of this study is that the discovered profile of potential German tourist will help VisitKarelia and other local entrepreneurs to target their marketing on right segment and into right channels. Previously there has not been so specific study focused on German tourists in North Karelia, so these findings are giving useful information about the potential customers. In addition, the explored most actively used information channels will help to target marketing into right channels to reach the right audience. At this moment VisitKarelia does not have active social media marketing plan on German markets, so these results could guide into right path to make most effective marketing.

Secondly, the results brought forth that Germans find it important that accommodation and activities are possible to book online. That is a good reminder for local businesses that services should be available online at least on English. Having information in German was rather neutral for respondents. These online bookings were emphasized also, as most of the respondents would make all the booking by themselves instead of travel agencies. Based on author's own experiences and knowledge of North Karelia's regional level, there are unfortunately not that many services and products available, which can be booked online.

The findings also support the importance of sustainability. As VisitKarelia is enhancing sustainability in their marketing and as a part of their strategy, it is useful to know that it can be marketed also on abroad. For local entrepreneurs it can be also stated that it is better highlight the sustainability than hide it.

As Germans were most likely traveling to North Karelia by car but also interested to arrive by plane, it is useful information for VisitKarelia. As a DMO, they could enhance accessibility of the area in collaboration with other stakeholders to improve local and national public transportation. Like it was mentioned in previous chapter, there has been low usage rate of the local airport in North Karelia. It is unaware if the flight connections will continue in the future. The findings of this study support the fact that tourists from abroad would willingly arrive by plane if there are enough affordable connections. That could also increase the attractivity of the region and North Karelia could compete with Lapland as a destination. Without flying connection North Karelia is rather hard to achieve and not worthy for shorter holidays.

5.4 Evaluation of the study

The quality of quantitative studies is analyzed through measurements of validity and reliability. Validity means that the contexts are logical and accurately measured. Reliability is connected to consistency of measure and to the fact that you can achieve similar results each time the test is made. (Heale & Twycross, 2015)

Firstly, the response rate was extremely low and therefore the results are not so reliable. Due to author's own timely resources the online survey was available only for one month and other potential distribution channels were not discovered. However, the timing was good, because all the responses were gathered before the war started in Ukraine in the end of February 2022. So, the war did not have impact on the results. For example, the willingness to travel to North Karelia could have been much lower and associations with Russian border could have been more visible. For the future, it would be interesting to discover whether the war and location close to Russia has a negative impact on traveling willingness to North Karelia.

Feedback that was given through Facebook posts revealed that there were few technical issues that had impact on responses. Firstly, according to Nordic Marketing, the questionnaire seemed to be too long, which decreased the response rate. Secondly, Finntouch – Finnland hautnah Facebook-group brought forth that in the question number 2, which were asking how many times the respondent have been in Finland, it was not possible to answer more than 10 times. However, the scale showed that those who answered 10, they have been traveling in Finland a lot.

Obviously, the distribution channels were not suitable for certain study, or the survey should have been shorter and suitable for mobile phone. The questionnaire included several Likert-scale questions, which were not optimal to fill and reply on mobile version. On desktop version the visualization was better. The survey could have been tested several times on both versions to detect the visual problems.

The study is valid as the theoretical background has been the base of the online survey. Earlier studies have been supporting the process of writing. All results of the survey are presented openly and detailed. Also, the open ended questions are visible with translations in the end of the paper. All questions and replies were investigated and opened in text.

It is worthwhile to notice, that the target group was also only Germans, not the whole DACH-market to keep the research clearly defined. DACH-market includes so many different cultures and segments that analyzing the whole group would have been too much. However, there is the risk that the target group was too specific and does not give reliable results. The target group

was already somehow familiar with Finland, and they were interested about the destination and culture. They have got previously lots of information about the region through the blog posts, pictures and news on social media channels. The target group was full of Finland enthusiasts, who want to know more. If the questionnaire would be sent to randomly picked Germans, the results might be different. So, it is important to keep that in mind when interpreting the results.

When it comes to adaptability, this study is focused only on the region of North Karelia. The results are not fully applicable to other regions. North Karelia has its own limits due to location and it is known especially about nature attractions, lakes and local culture. However, the results were comparable with the similar studies from Sweden and Norway, so in that light, at least partly the study can be applied to other regions as well here in Northern Europe.

5.5 Suggestions for future research

During the master's thesis writing process the world's situation changed radically due to Russian's attack to Ukraine in the end of February 2022. However, the timing of collecting the responses were luckily good and the war did not have impact on answers and attitudes towards Finland and its close location with Russia. Nevertheless, in the future it might be a significant factor to impact on traveling motivations and willingness to travel to Finland and especially to North Karelia. As the results showed, many of the respondents mentioned the borderline with Russia or connected the location close to Russia. How to maintain the willingness to travel to Finland as Germans have been the second largest international segment so far in Finland?

It is hard to speculate how the war will impact on international tourist arrivals in Finland. According to Yle (2022) and Business Finland (2022) there will be for sure negative effects on arrivals from abroad and some tourists have already cancelled their trips to Finland. It is not clear how long the current situation lasts and what will happen in the future. However, the most significant difference is that there will be no more marketing to Russia and also traveling from Russia to Finland is difficult due to war in Ukraine. Already during the Covid-19 the arrivals of Russian travellers dropped from 147 000 in 2019 to 5600 in 2020 January. (Business Finland, 2022) That gives

great opportunity to enhance other segments, for instance DACH-markets. For the future studies, it would be interesting to find out more closely, what kind of impact our location has to travel willingness and whether the feelings are positive or negative.

Secondly, sustainability is more and more highlighted in tourism. This study focused on the importance of having sustainable products, services and certificates but the results did not give any further information, how much it for instance effects on accommodation choice or in general into destination choice. Also, it was not explored, how much respondents actually have knowledge related to sustainability and different certificates. These results pointed out that males are finding sustainability more important than females. However, the distribution of different genders was not even, so it could be beneficial to ensure the results with bigger sample.

Thirdly, as the target group of this study was Finland enthusiasts, it would be interesting to investigate further similar topics with larger samples and also with people who are not so familiar with Finland. Nevertheless, if there are only random people answering the survey, it is possible that they are not at all potential consumers to travel Finland. Also, as North Karelia and VisitKarelia are both having problems to gain visibility abroad, it would be beneficial to discover, how to increase brand awareness. The results of this master's thesis will be helpful in that process to focus the marketing on the right channels with right messages.

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Appendix 1. Theoretical background of the survey.

Category	Source	Question
Background information of traveling in Finland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you been before in Finland? How many times? (modified Jacobsen & Munar, 2012; Zillinger et al., 2018) • How did you arrive to Finland (derived from Gross & Grimm, 2018) • Author's own modification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q1, Q2 • Q3, Q7 • Q4
North Karelia potential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authors own modifications • Have you been before in North Karelia? (modified Jacobsen & Munar, 2012) • How did you arrive to North Karelia? (derived from Gross & Grimm, 2018) • Which will be your main transportation mode in North Karelia? (derived from Zillinger et al., 2018) • Booking the trip (modified Gross & Grimm, 2018) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q5, Q8, Q11 • Q6 • Q7 • Q9 • Q10
Information channels – online and printed media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication channels (derived from Zillinger et al., 2018; Zillinger, 2020b; ReiseAnalyse, 2021a) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q12, Q13
Attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • list of attributes (modified ReiseAnalyse, 2021b; Pesonen & Komppula, 2010) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q14
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language options (modified Zillinger et al., 2018) • Visuality vs. text (modified Zillinger, 2020b) • Emotional messages (modified Rodríguez-Molina, Frías-Jamilena and Castañeda-García, 2015) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q15

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sustainability in communication (derived from Tölkes, 2018a) • importance of ecolabels (modified Tiago et al., 2021) • Author's own and VisitKarelia's modifications 	
Demographics, VisitKarelia and the Lottery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occupation (derived from Karl, Bauer, Ritchie & Passauer, 2020) • Income (derived from Statista, 2022b) • Level of education (modified Karl, Bauer, Ritchie & Passauer, 2020) • Marital status (modified Zillinger et al., 2018) • Author's own and VisitKarelia's modifications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q19 • Q20 • Q21 • Q22 • Q17, Q18, Q23, Q24, Q25, Q26

Appendix 2. The survey questions in English.

Background information of traveling in Finland	
1) Have you been in Finland?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No
2) How many times have you visited Finland? Please write down in numbers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insert the amount here
3) How did you arrive to Finland? If you have been several times in Finland, select the most common one.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By air • By sea • By land
4) With whom you were traveling with? If you have traveled several times, which was the most common traveling companion?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alone • With family • With partner • With group • With friend(s)/relative(s)

North Karelia potential	
5) What comes to your mind when you hear or see a word "North Karelia"? Write down three (3) words that come to your mind first.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open text box
6) Which of the following statements describes best your knowledge of the region called North Karelia? (The region North Karelia is marked with light green in the map).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have visited North Karelia several times. • I have visited North Karelia once. • I have not visited North Karelia, but I know something about region's services and places. • I have not visited North Karelia, but I know that it locates in Eastern Finland. • I have not visited North Karelia and I know nothing about it.
7) How did you arrive to North Karelia? You can pick up several options. If you have visited North Karelia several times, please answer according to the last visit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By plane • By car (including campers etc.) • By train • By bus

- Other, which one? (Open text box)

8) How likely you would travel to Finland and especially to North Karelia within the next two years? (In case that Covid-19 enables traveling normally.)

- Certainly
- Possibly
- Unlikely
- Absolutely not

9) If you consider traveling to North Karelia, which would be the most likely mode of transport to arrive to the destination?

- By plane
- By car (including campers etc.)
- By train
- By bus
- Other, which one? (Open text box)

10) If you consider traveling to North Karelia, how would you book the trip?

- I would make all the bookings by myself.
- I would book a trip through a travel agent.
- I would book partly by myself and partly through a travel agent.

11) If you consider traveling to North Karelia, with whom would you most likely travel?

- Alone
- With family
- With partner
- With group
- With friend(s)/relative(s)

Information channels

12) How actively do you use the following information channels to find information of a destination? (5-point Likert scale: 1=never, 2= not so actively, 3=neutral, 4=actively, 5=very actively)

- Facebook page of a destination
- Travel related Facebook groups
- Instagram account of a destination
- YouTube channel of a destination
- Twitter account of a destination
- TikTok
- TripAdvisor
- Booking.com
- Official destination websites
- Newsletters
- Other online channel, which one? (Open text box)

13) How actively do you use the following traditional information channels to find information of a destination? (5-point Likert scale: 1=never, 2= not so actively, 3=neutral, 4=actively, 5=very actively)

- Guidebooks
- Brochures
- Newspapers
- Magazines
- Travel agencies
- Maps
- TV
- Friends/relatives
- Own experience
- Other traditional channel, which one? (Open text box)

Attributes

14) How attractive you find the following attributes of a destination? (5-point Likert-scale:

1=not at all attractive, 2=not very attractive, 3=neutral, 4=attractive, 5=very attractive)

- Unspoiled nature
- Location close to a lake
- Midnight sun
- Forests
- Rural settings
- National Parks
- Finnish sauna
- Local culture
- Local food
- Northern lights
- Cottage holiday
- Special accommodation (like glass igloos)
- Relaxation
- Meditation
- Luxurious experiences

Communication

15) How important do you find the following statements in marketing communication of a destination? (5-point Likert-scale: 1=not at all important, 2=not very important, 3=neutral, 4=important, 5=very important)

- The information is available in German.
- There are more pictures than text.
- Emotional messages have been used.
- There are sustainable products/services available.
- Accommodation has an ecolabel or other certificate of sustainability.

- It is possible to book accommodation online.
- It is possible to book activities online.
- There is tailor made packages available.
- There is a map available to see the location.
- There is information about distances, for instance how far North Karelia is from Helsinki.
- There is information how to reach the destination.

Demographics

16) Gender

- Male
- Female
- Other

17) Age

- Respondents will submit their age

18) Residence

- Baden-Württemberg
- Bavaria
- Berlin
- Brandenburg
- Bremen
- Hamburg
- Hesse
- Lower Saxony
- Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania
- North Rhine-Westphalia
- Rhineland-Palatinate
- Saarland
- Saxony
- Saxony-Anhalt
- Schleswig-Holstein
- Thuringia

19) Occupation

- Employed (full-/parttime, caretaker)
- Unemployed
- Retired
- In education
- Other, which one? (Open text box)

20) Income per month (The average gross salary per month in Germany was 3975 € in 2020)

- Below the average

- The average
- Above the average

21) Level of education

- Doctoral Degree
- Diploma (=Degree that someone received after their studies, before the Master/Bachelor system was implemented)
- Master's Degree
- Bachelor's Degree
- Apprenticeship
- Highschool Degree
- Degree between Middle- and Highschool
- Middle school Degree
- Other, which one? (Open text box)

22) Marital status

- Single without kids
- Single with kids
- In relationship without kids
- In relationship with kids

23) How many times you travel abroad per year? (In normal occasion without Covid-19)

- Less than once per year
- Once a year
- Two or three times a year
- More than three times a year

VisitKarelia

24) What comes to your mind when you hear or see word "VisitKarelia"?

- Respondents will submit their answer here.

The Lottery

25) Lottery

- I will participate in the lottery.
- I will not participate in the lottery.

26) Contact details for the lottery

- First name
- Last name
- E-mail address
- Address
- Post code
- Home county/City
- Country

Appendix 3. The original survey in German.

Hintergrundinformation zum Reisen in Finnland	
1) Waren Sie schon Mal in Finnland?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ja • Nein
2) Wie viele Male waren Sie schon in Finnland? Schreiben Sie bitte mit Nummern auf.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Das offene Textfeld
3) Wie sind Sie nach Finnland gereist? Wenn Sie mehrfach in Finnland waren, bitte die häufigste Anreiseart wählen.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mit dem Flugzeug • Auf dem Seeweg • Über Land
4) Mit wem sind Sie zusammen gereist? Wenn Sie mehrfach in Finnland waren, was war die häufigste Reisegesellschaft?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allein • Mit der Familie • Mit Partner(in) • Mit Gruppe • Mit Freund(in/innen) /Verwandte(n)

Nordkarelien Potenzial	
5) Was fällt Ihnen ein, wenn Sie das Wort "Nordkarelien" hören oder lesen? Bitte schreiben Sie drei (3) Wörter auf, die Ihnen zuerst in den Sinn kommen.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Das offene Textfeld.
6) Welche der folgenden Aussagen beschreibt Ihre Kenntnisse über die Region Nordkarelien am besten? (Die Region Nordkarelien ist in der Karte mit hellgrün eingegrenzt.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ich habe Nordkarelien mehrere Male besucht. • Ich habe Nordkarelien einmal besucht. • Ich habe Nordkarelien noch nicht besucht, aber ich weiß etwas über die Services und Orte der Region. • Ich habe Nordkarelien noch nicht besucht, aber ich weiß, dass es in Ost Finnland liegt. • Ich habe Nordkarelien noch nicht besucht und ich weiß nichts über die Region.
7) Wie sind Sie nach Nordkarelien gereist? Sie können mehrere Alternativen wählen. Wenn Sie mehrere Male nach Nordkarelien gereist sind, beziehen Sie sich bitte auf Ihre letzte Reise.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mit dem Flugzeug

- Mit dem Auto (inkl. Wohnmobil und Wohnwagen)
- Mit dem Zug
- Mit dem Bus
- Andere, welches? (Das offene Textfeld)

8) Wie wahrscheinlich würden Sie in den nächsten zwei Jahren nach Finnland und insbesondere nach Nordkarelien reisen? (Falls Covid-19 das normale Reisen ermöglicht.)

- Sehr wahrscheinlich
- Möglicherweise
- Unwahrscheinlich
- Absolut nicht

9) Wenn Sie in Erwägung ziehen, nach Nordkarelien zu reisen, welches ist das wahrscheinlichste Transportmittel, um das Ziel zu erreichen?

- Mit dem Flugzeug
- Mit dem Auto (inkl. Wohnmobil und Wohnwagen)
- Mit dem Zug
- Mit dem Bus
- Andere, welches? (Das offene Textfeld)

10) Wenn Sie eine Reise nach Nordkarelien in Betracht ziehen, wie würden Sie die Reise buchen?

- Ich würde alle Buchungen selbst machen.
- Ich würde alle Buchungen über ein Reisebüro machen.
- Ich würde einige Buchungen selbst machen und einige über ein Reisebüro.

11) Wenn Sie in Erwägung ziehen, nach Nordkarelien zu reisen, mit wem würden Sie am ehesten reisen?

- Allein
- Mit der Familie
- Mit Partner(in)
- Mit Gruppe
- Mit Freund(in/innen) / Verwandte(n)

Informationsquellen

12) Wie aktiv nutzen Sie die folgenden online Informationsquellen, wenn Sie Informationen über eine Destination suchen? (Die 5-Punkte Likert Skala: 1=Nie, 2=Nicht sehr aktiv, 3=Neutral, 4=Aktiv und 5=Sehr aktiv)

- Facebook Seite einer Destination
- Reisebezogene Facebook Gruppen
- Instagram Seite einer Destination

- YouTube Kanal einer Destination
- Twitter Seite einer Destination
- TikTok
- TripAdvisor
- Booking.com
- Offiziell Webseite einer Destination
- Newsletter
- Andere online Kanal, welcher? (Das offene Textfeld)

13) Wie aktiv nutzen Sie die folgenden traditionellen Informationsquellen, wenn Sie Informationen über eine Destination suchen? (Die 5-Punkte Likert Skala: 1=Nie, 2=Nicht sehr aktiv, 3=Neutral, 4=Aktiv und 5=Sehr aktiv)

- Reiseführer
- Broschüre
- Zeitung
- Journal
- Reisebüro
- Karten
- Fernsehen
- Freunden/Verwandten
- Eigene Erfahrungen
- Andere traditionelle Kanal, welcher? (Das offene Textfeld)

Attribute

14) Wie attraktiv finden Sie die folgenden Attribute eines Reiseziels? (Die 5-Punkte Likert Skala: 1=Überhaupt nicht attraktiv, 2=Wenig attraktiv, 3=Neutral, 4=Attraktiv und 5=Sehr attraktiv)

- Reine Natur
- Standort nahe am See
- Mitternachtssonne
- Wälder
- Ländliche Region
- Nationalparks
- Finnische Sauna
- Lokale Kultur
- Lokales Essen
- Nordlicht
- Ferienhäuser
- Spezielle Unterkunft (z.B. Glass Iglos)
- Entspannung
- Meditation
- Luxuriöse Erfahrungen

Marketingkommunikation

15) Wie wichtig finden Sie die folgenden Aussagen in der Marketingkommunikation einer Destination? (Die 5-Punkte Likert Skala: 1=Überhaupt nicht wichtig, 2=Nicht so wichtig, 3=Neutral, 4=Wichtig und 5=Sehr wichtig)

- Die Information ist auf Deutsch geschrieben.
- Es gibt mehr Fotos als Text.
- Es gibt emotionale Nachrichten.
- Es gibt nachhaltigen Produkte und Dienstleistungen in der Destination.
- Die Unterkunft hat ein Umweltzeichen oder ein anderes Zertifikat der Nachhaltigkeit.
- Es ist möglich eine Unterkunft online zu buchen.
- Es ist möglich Aktivitäten online zu buchen.
- Es sind maßgeschneiderte Touren verfügbar.
- Es gibt eine Karte des Standortes zu sehen.
- Es gibt Informationen über die Distanzen z.B. zwischen Helsinki und Nordkarelien.
- Es gibt Informationen wie man die Destination erreichen kann.

Demografische Daten

16) Geschlecht

- Mann
- Frau
- Andere

17) Alter (Schreiben Sie bitten mit Nummern auf.)

- Das offene Textfeld

18) Wohnort

- Baden-Württemberg
- Bayern
- Berlin
- Brandenburg
- Bremen
- Hamburg
- Hessen
- Mecklenburg-Vorpommern
- Niedersachsen
- Nordrhein-Westfalen
- Rheinland-Pfalz
- Saarland
- Sachsen
- Sachsen-Anhalt
- Schleswig-Holstein
- Thüringen

19) Beschäftigung

- Berufstätig
- Arbeitslos
- Rentner(in)
- Student(in)
- Sonstiges, welche? (Das offene Textfeld)

20) Einkommen pro Monat (Durchschnittliche Brutto Monatsverdienst Vollzeit in Deutschland im Jahr 2020 war 3975 €)

- Unter dem Durchschnitt
- Durchschnitt
- Über dem Durchschnitt

21) Ihr höchster erworbener Schulabschluss

- Doktor (PhD)
- Diplom
- Master
- Bachelor
- Ausbildung
- (Fach-)Abitur
- Realschulabschluss
- Mittelschulabschluss
- Sonstiges, welcher? (Das offene Textfeld)

22) Familienstand

- Single ohne Kinder
- Single mit Kindern
- In einer Partnerschaft ohne Kinder
- In einer Partnerschaft mit Kindern

23) Wie häufig reisen Sie pro Jahr ins Ausland? (In Normalfall ohne Covid-19)

- Weniger als einmal pro Jahr
- Einmal pro Jahr
- Zweimal oder dreimal pro Jahr
- Mehr als dreimal pro Jahr

VisitKarelia

24) Was fällt Ihnen ein, wenn Sie das Wort "VisitKarelia" hören oder lesen?

- Das offene Textfeld.

Das Gewinnspiel

25) Gewinnspiel.

- Ich nehme am Gewinnspiel teil.
- Ich nehme nicht am Gewinnspiel teil.

26) Kontaktdaten für das Gewinnspiel

- Vorname
- Nachname
- E-Mail Adresse
- Adresse
- PLZ
- Ort
- Land

Appendix 4. Respondents' answers to the question 24 in their original form.

Original answers in German	Answers translated in English
„Was fällt Ihnen ein, wenn Sie das Wort "VisitKarelia" hören oder lesen?“	"What comes to your mind when you hear or read the word "VisitKarelia"?
Facebook	Facebook
Besucht Karelien	Visit Karelia
Vorfreude auf den Sommer und eine gut gemachte Website	Looking forward to summer and a well-made website
Klingt wie eine übliche offizielle Reise Seite im Internet	Sounds like a usual official traveling site on the Internet
Sehnsucht nach diesem fantastischen Land und dieser tollen Region. Außerdem unsere gute Erinnerungen an unsere Urlaube 2020 und 2021 in Finnland.	Longing for this fantastic country and this great region. Also, our good memories from our 2020 and 2021 holidays in Finland.
Dachzelt aufs Auto und los geht's.	Roof tent on the car and off you go.
Informativ	Informative
Unterstützung bei der Urlaubsgestaltung	Supports with vacation planning
Besuch in Ilomantsi	Visit in Ilomantsi
klangvoll	fine-sounding
Die Tourismusorganisation von Nordkarelien :-)	The tourism organization of North Karelia :-)
Urlaub	Holiday
Tourismus	Tourism
Reise	Trip
Nichts wie los	Off we go
eine Aufforderung nach Karelien zu fahren in engl. Sprache	An invitation to go to Karelia in English language
Schlittenhunde, Ruhe, Wald, Wasser, Ruuna, „Riveravting“, Sauna, gute Freunde, neue Heimat in 5Jahren	Sleddogs, peace, forest, water, Ruunaa, "Riveravting", sauna, good friends, new home in 5 years
Freude	Joy
Natur, piirakka, See, luonto, mökki, Wald, koli, Itäsuomi	Nature, pie, lake, nature, cottage, forest, Koli, Eastern Finland
Ich kenne Karelia nicht	I don't know Karelia
Klingt nach Urlaub	Sounds like vacation
Natur pur	Pure nature
Urlaub in einer besonderen Region Finnlands	Holiday in a special region of Finland
Schöner, entspannter Urlaub	Nice, relaxed holiday
Gute Plattform über Karelien	Good platform about Karelia
Englische Werbung, Urlaub in Karelien, Tourismus antreiben	English advertising, holiday in Karelia, drives tourism
- Webseite	- Website - Like VisitFinland or VisitHelsinki

- Wie Visitfinnland oder VisitHelsinki wichtige Informationen	important information
Sehnsucht nach Finnland, Natur, Einsamkeit	Longing for Finland, nature, solitude
Urlaubsvorfreude	Looking forward a holiday
Urlaub, Entspannung, Angeln	Holiday, relaxation, fishing
Offizielle Website von Karelien - Reiseinfos - Unterseite von VisitFinland?	An official website of Karelia – traveling information – subsite of VisitFinland?
Es erinnert an Visit Helsinki oder visit Vinland und andere Destinationen, die das ebenfalls nutzen und eigentlich sind das im Netz immer Seiten mit guter Qualität.	It is similar with Visit Helsinki or Visit Finland and other destinations that also use it and actually these are always good quality sites on the web.
Spannung, was sich dahinter verbirgt	Excitement, what is behind it
Dann erinnere ich mich sofort an meine Zeit in Karelien als AuPair und den unsagbar gigantischen Blick vom Koli auf Karelien. Unvergesslich.	Then I immediately remember my time in Karelia as an au pair and the unspeakably gigantic view of Karelia from Koli. Unforgettable.
Heimweh	Homesickness
Möchte ich unbedingt hin	I really want to go
Informationen	Information
Tolle Infos. Gut vertreten auf social media. Neue Anreize. Professionell. Informativ.	Great info. Well represented on social media. New incentives. Professional. Informativ.
Tourismus-Webseite	Tourism-website
Es ist eine sehr übersichtliche Homepage mit allen Informationen die man benötigt. Ich persönlich habe VisitKarelia schon sehr häufig und auch sehr gerne besucht.	It is a very clear homepage with all the information you need. Personally, I have visited VisitKarelia very often and I really enjoy it.
Eine Werbekampagne.	An advertising campaign.
Qualifizierte Informationen über Karelien	Qualified information about Karelia
Ein Prospekt	A brochure
Und der Gedanke "ja sofort"	And the thought "yes right now"
Webseite mit Information über Karelia Region	A website with information of the region of Karelia
Urlaub	Holiday
Da muss ich hin ❤FI nach Finnland zu reisen	I have to go there ❤FI To travel to Finland
Urlaub, Seen, Entspannung, Natur, Gesundheit	Holiday, lakes, relaxation, nature, health
Karelien besuchen - ohne Kontext nix Besonderes...	Visit Karelia - nothing special without context...
Ich möchte Karelien gern kennen lernen	I would like to get to know Karelia
Freude	Joy
Destination, Marketing	Destination, marketing
Natur entspannung	Nature relaxation
Hin	There

Das es im Karelien geht	That it works in Karelia
Natur Online Urlaub	Nature online holiday
Sofort starten	Start immediately
Finnland	Finland
Gesammelte Informationen, Überblick, Buchungsmöglichkeiten, Tipps und Empfehlungen	Collected information, overview, booking options, tips and recommendations
Neugierig geworden	I'm curious
Internetseite bzw. Kampagne	Website or campaign
Karjalanpaisti!	Karelian stew!
Neugier, Midsommer	Curiosity, midsummer
Einladend :)	Inviting :)
Kenne ich nicht. Ich folge "VisitFinland" auf Facebook.	I don't know it. I follow "VisitFinland" on Facebook.
Aboniert	Subscribed
Winter wonderland ! Natur pur	Winter wonderland ! Pure nature
Dass es wahrscheinlich die offizielle Seite ist	That it's probably the official site
Sollte ich mir mal genauer ansehen...	Should I take a closer look...
Wandern in den Wäldern (mit Hund), Ruhe, Natur, wenig Publikumsverkehr, wunderschöne Landschaft, Nordlichter, Schnee, Seen, Aktivitäten draußen, Traditionen, landestypisches Essen, Entspannung	Hiking in the woods (with dog), peace, nature, little public transportation, beautiful scenery, northern lights, snow, lakes, outdoor activities, traditions, local food, relaxation
Firma auf Bedürfnisse der Touristen fokussiert	Company focused on tourists' needs
Marketing und Werbung für eine Urlaubsregion	Marketing and advertising for a holiday region
Eine Website mit allen Informationen über Nordkarelien	A website with all information about North Karelia
Karelische Piroggen, Seen, Wälder, Mücken, Urlaub, Natur	Karelian pies, lakes, forests, mosquitos, holiday, nature
Eine informative Seite über die Region, mit Karten und Tipps, was man in der Umgebung machen kann. Aber auch etwas über die Menschen, die hier leben.	An informative site about the region, with maps and tips on what to do in the area. But also, something about the people who live here.
Inspiration für Tagesausflüge für die nächste Reise nach Nordkarelien	Inspiration for day trips for next trip to North Karelia
Leider nicht Finnland, sondern eher Russland	Unfortunately, not Finland, but rather Russia
Tourismus infos	Tourism information
Internetauftritt und Youtube	Website and YouTube
Karelien	Karelia
Finland und die Ruhe die ich damit verbinde. Die tolle Landschaft und schönen Seen. Ein stück zuhause	Finland and the tranquility I associate with it. The great scenery and beautiful lakes. A piece of home

Komme her, besuche Karelien, du bist willkommen	Come here, visit Karelia, you are welcome
Vorfreude auf Entspannung, Natur, Sauna, Wald, Seen, schöne Momente und neue Dinge entdecken	Anticipation of relaxation, nature, sauna, for- est, lakes, discovering beautiful moments and new things
Ab nach Finnland!	Off to Finland!
Fernweh, Piroggen, Elchjagd	Wanderlust, pies, moose hunting
Hier finde ich vielfältige Infos über Karelien - ähnlich wie visitfinland, visitlapland etc- klingt einladend	Hier I find variety of information about Kare- lia - similar with Visit Finland, Visit Lapland etc. sounds inviting
Heimelig	Homey
Hier bekomme ich touristische Informatio- nen über Karelien	From there I get tourism information about Karelia
Onlineseite	Online site
Sehr kompetente Tourismusorganisation	Very competent tourism organization
Via karelia	Via Karelia
Hyvää Hyvää	Good Good
Noch nicht von gehört	Haven't heard of it yet
Interesse	Interest
Ich hab dann gute Gefühle	I have good feelings
Internetseite	Internet site
Kenne ich bisher nicht, da ich alle bisherigen Infos über meine Freundin bekommen habe, die in Joensuu lebt. (und seit Kurzem ein Ho- tel in Joensuu hat).	I don't know so far, because I got all the in- formation so far from my girlfriend, who lives in Joensuu (and recently has a hotel in Joensuu).
Werde mich aber über VisitKarelia schlau machen	But I'll find out about VisitKarelia
Fichtenwälder	Spruce forests
Das man den Ort besuchen soll	That you should visit the place
Urlaub	Holiday
Eine Internetseite mit Infos über Karelien. Ähnlicher Seiten kenne ich schon für andere Regionen Finnlands. Die finde ich sehr gut und informativ.	A website with information about Karelia. I know already similar sites from another re- gions of Finland. I find them very good and informative.
Eine Finnishkurs Mitschülerin die immer dorthin fährt	A Finnish course classmate who always goes there
Eine Ecke von Finnland die ich gerne noch- mal besuchen möchte	A corner of Finland I would like to visit again
Urlaub	Holiday
Koli	Koli
Sollte ich endlich machen.	I should finally do it.
Wälder, Seen und Bären	Forests, lakes and bears.
Mach ich gerne 😊	I'd like to do it 😊
Tervetuloa	Welcome

Touristeninformation	Tourist Information
Kurz und knackig	Keeping a long story short
Das Visit erinnert an Visit Denmark oder Helsinki. Das verbinde ich mit einer informativen Internetseite, die mit guten Infos und schönen Bildern gefüllt ist.	It reminds of Visit Denmark of Helsinki. I connect it to an informative website, which is filled with good information and beautiful pictures
Informationen über eine bestimmte Region	Information about a specific region
Marketing, Homepage, Tourismus, Hashtag	Marketing, homepage, tourism, hashtag
Eine Internetseite, wo man Informationen über Karelien bekommt.	A website where you can get information about Karelia.
Tja, Finnland oder Russland? Oder beides?	Well, Finland or Russia? Or both?
Ich muss meine Planungen für nächstes Jahr weiter ausarbeiten !	I have to continue to work out my plans for next year!
Sehr gute Internetseite. Schön gemacht mit ausreichend Fotos, Informationen über die Region und was für mich am wichtigsten ist: die Links zu Unterkünften, Nationalparks usw.	Very good website. Nicely done with enough photos, information about the area and what is most important to me: the links to accommodation, national parks etc.
Keine Ahnung	No idea
Das ich in meinem Leben gerne einmal dort hin möchte	I would like to go there once in my life
Dass ich dieses Wort noch nicht kenne, aber gerne mich informiere	That I don't know this word yet, but would like to inform myself
Marketing der Region Nordkarelien, mit atemberaubend schönen Fotos (Instagram). Da möchte ich sofort los...	Marketing of the North Karelia region, with breathtakingly beautiful photos (Instagram). I want to go there right now...
Fernweh	wanderlust
WunschDestination	desired destination
Rentiere	reindeer
Hundeschlitten	dog sled
Sehnsucht	Yearning
Muss ich gleich suchen	I have to search right away
Finland	Finland
Urlaub	Holiday
Tourismusverband der Region Karelien	Tourist Board of Karelia Region
Klingt nach einer gut sortierten und strukturierten Homepage.	Sounds like a well sorted and structured homepage.
Tourismusverband -> wie visitfinland, visit-turku visithelsinki, visitlapland etc -> wiedererkennungswert	Tourist board -> like VisitFinland, VisitTurku VisitHelsinki, VisitLapland etc -> recognizable
Naturpur	Pure nature
Bisher zu selten damit auseinandergesetzt	Rarely dealt with it so far
Besuche kareljen	Visit Karelia

Mein letzter Urlaub dort 2014, als wir an der russ. Grenze entlang durch die Wildnis fuhren und wilde Waldrentiere sahen! Wir kommen auf jeden Fall wieder	My last vacation there in 2014 when we drove along the Russian border through the wilderness and saw wild forest reindeer! We will be back definitely
Ab in die Heimat. Los geht's! 😊	Off to home. Here we go! 😊
Touristinformation in Karelien worüber man alle wichtigen infos bekommt	Tourist information in Karelia where you can get all the important information
Natur	Nature
Spannend, informativ	Exciting, informative
Der erholsamste Urlaub meines Lebens im letzten Jahr in einem Mökki auf einer Insel im Orivesi in der Nähe von Savonranta. Ruhe, Stille, Sauna, im See schwimmen,	The most relaxing holiday of my life last year in a cottage on an island in the Orivesi near Savonranta. Peace, quiet, sauna, swimming in the lake,
Natur, Erholung, Essen, wandern	Nature, relaxation, food, hiking
Letz Go	Let's go
Info	Information
..besuche Karelien.. es könnte sich lohnen..	..visit Karelia.. it might be worth it..
Eine website mit infos und urlaubstipps zu kareljen	A website with information and holiday tips about Karelia
Das ich da mal hin muss :-)	That I have to go there :-)
Schöne Seite mit allen nötigen Informationen und tollen Bildern.	Nice site with all the necessary information and great pictures.
Heimat	Home country
Imagekampagne der Region	Image campaign of the region
Finnland, Wälder, Seen, Koli, gutes Essen, Kultur, Geschichte	Finland, forests, lakes, Koli, good food, culture, history
Interessant, Neugier, gespannt	Interesting, curious, excited
Ich vermute eine WebSeite mit allen relevanten Informationen und Buchungsmöglichkeiten.	I assume a website with all relevant information and booking options.
Weckt Neugierde zu Schauen, was Karelien bietet	Arouses curiosity to see what Karelia has to offer
Finnland Urlaub	Finland holiday
Tourismusbüro	Tourist office
Finnland, Natur, schöne Landschaft	Finland, nature, beautiful landscape
Nichts	Nothing
Natur, Entspannung, See	Nature, relaxation, lake
Macht Lust sich damit zu befassen.	Makes you want to deal with it.
Dass es vermutlich eine ebenso kompetente Seite wie visitfinland und ähnliche benannte Seiten ist. Eine hervorragende Informationsquelle!	That it is probably as competent a site as VisitFinland and similar named sites. An excellent source of information!
Homepage	Homepage
Prospekte	brochures
Ich habe Lust auf eine Reise nach Finnland.	I would like to take a trip to Finland.

Reiseblog	Traveling blog
Ein Besuch in der Region, Einblicke in Ort und Gesellschaft	A visit to the region, insights into the place and society
Dass ich mal wieder auf Instagram gucken muss...	That I have to check Instagram again...
Werbekampagne, Joensuu besuche Karelien, Bomba, Koli, Natur, schöne Zeit, wandern	Advertising campaign, Joensuu visit Karelia, Bomba, Koli, nature, good time, hiking
Tourismus	Tourism
Möchte dort Urlaub machen.	I want to have a holiday there
Reiselust, Boot fahren, Seen	Wanderlust, boating, lakes
Interessant. Muss ich unbedingt mal nachschauen. Bestimmt gute Reiseempfehlungen.	Interesting. I definitely have to take a look. Certainly, good travel recommendations.
Wälder/Natur, „weiße Nächte“, Sauna, Lagerfeuer, Angeln, Munki & Kahvi, Käsemökki	Forests/nature, “white nights”, sauna, camp fire, fishing, donut and coffee, summer cottage
- den nächsten Urlaub planen ;-) - die Website / Facebookseite von visitKarelia	- plan the next vacation ;-) - the website / Facebook page of visitKarelia
Reiseagentur?	Travel agency?
Neugierde	curiosity
Tradition	tradition
Orthodoxe Kirche	Orthodox church
karelische Piroggen	Karelian pies
Karelische Mundart	Karelian dialect
Harmonie	Harmony
Gerne	With pleasure
Erholung	relaxation
Natur	nature
Freiheit	freedom
Da möchte ich hin	I want to go there
Die Tourismus Vereinigung der Region	The Tourist Association of the Region
Tourismusorganisation. Informationen über die Region und ihre Dienstleister.	tourism organization. Information about the region and its service providers.
Informationen über die Region und Tipps	Information about the region and tips
Homepage des Fremdenverkehrsamt Karelien	Homepage of the Karelia Tourist Board
Tolle Informationsquelle	Great source of information
Jetzt etwas mehr.	Now something more.
Instagram, schöne Fotos, Touristeninformationen	Instagram, beautiful pictures, tourist information
Eine Homepage...	A homepage...
Urlaub in Finnland	Holiday in Finland
Facebook insta	Facebook Instagram
Finnland	Finland

Lust die finnische Seenplatte zu bereisen.	Desire to travel the Finnish lake district.
Seite über Reisen nach und Infos über Nord-karelien	Page about travel to and information about North Karelia.
Finnland	Finland

Appendix 5. Respondents' image of North Karelia.

Original answers in German (1/2)	Answers translated in English (1/2)	Original answers in German (2/2)	Answers translated in English (2/2)
Was fällt Ihnen ein, wenn Sie das Wort "Nordkarelien" hören oder lesen? Bitte schreiben Sie drei (3) Wörter auf, die Ihnen zuerst in den Sinn kommen.	What comes to your mind when you hear or read the words North Karelia? Please, write down three (3) words that come to your mind first.	Was fällt Ihnen ein, wenn Sie das Wort "Nordkarelien" hören oder lesen? Bitte schreiben Sie drei (3) Wörter auf, die Ihnen zuerst in den Sinn kommen.	What comes to your mind when you hear or read the words North Karelia? Please, write down three (3) words that come to your mind first.
Ruhe, Seenlandschaft, Natur	Peace, lake views, nature	Karellische Piroggen, Winter, Finnland	Karelian pies, winter, Finland
Koli, Wanderwege, Pielinen	Koli, hiking trails, the Lake Pielinen	Schnee, Ruhe, Polarlichter	Snow, peace, northern lights
Inarisee	The Lake Inari	Koli, Pielinen, Wälder	Koli, Lake Pielinen, forests
Koli, Pielinen, Joensuu	Koli, the Lake Pielinen, Joensuu	Piroggen, Schlittenhunde, Natur	Pies, sled dogs, nature
Endlose Wälder	Endless forests	Wälder, Natur, Karjalan Piirakka	Forests, nature, Karelian pie
Wald, Seen, Rentiere	Forest, lakes, reindeer	Nordlichter, Samen, Rentiere	Northern lights, the Sami people, reindeer
Wald, Russische Grenze, Nationalpark	Forest, the Russian border, national park	Karelische Piroggen	Karelian pies
Seen, Piroggen, Wanderurlaub	Lakes, pies, hiking holiday	Karjalanpiirakka, Urlaub, Natur	Karelian pie, holiday, nature
Ilomantsi, Ruhe, Bär	Ilomantsi, peace, bear	Koli, Piirakka, Karjala	Koli, pie, Karelia
Wald, Natur, Wasser	Forest, nature, water	Natur, Ursprünglichkeit, Kultur	Nature, originality, culture
Koli, Joensuu, Pielinen	Koli, Joensuu, Pielinen	Piroggen, Natur, Wilde Tiere	Pies, nature, wild animals
Joensuu, Rääkkylä, Urlaub	Joensuu, Rääkkylä, holiday	Seen, Wildnis, schönste mir bekannte Landschaft	Lakes, wilderness, the most beautiful landscape I know
Nähe zu Russland, karelische Piroggen, Winter	Close to Russia, Karelian pies, winter	Piirakka, Kantele, Kloster Valamo	Pies, kantele, Valamo monastery
Finnland, Region, Norden	Finland, region, north	Russland, Bären, Kälte	Russia, bears, cold

Finnland, Karelien pie, Grenzgebiet	Finland, Karelian pies, border area	Finnland, Wald, Sauna	Finland, forest, sauna
Wildnis, Russland, Weite	Wilderness, Russia, wideness	Uusi Valamo, Grenze zu Russland	New Valamo, Russian border
Wälder, Seen, Grenze	Forests, lakes, border	Natur, Landschaft, Finnland	Nature, landscape, Finland
Ehemann, Lieksa, Koli	Husband, Lieksa, Koli	Natur, See, Karelische Piroggen	Nature, lake, Karelian pies
Heimat, Familie, Entspannung	Home, family, relaxation	Ilosaarirock, Wälder, Flüsse	Ilosaarirock, forests, rivers
Koli, Joensuu, outokumpu	Koli, Joensuu, Outokumpu	Rentiere, Karelische Piroggen, Seen	Reindeer, Karelian pies, lakes
Ich kenne die Region leider nicht	Unfortunately, I don't know the area	Finnland, Russland, Grenzregion	Finland, Russia, border area
Natur, Friedlich, Lecker	Nature, peaceful, delicious	Natur, Sauna, Karelische Piroggen	Nature, sauna, Karelian pies
einmalige Landschaft	Unique landscape	Sehenswürdigkeiten, Was zu Essen Oder was zu trinken	Attractions, something to eat or drink
Piroggen, Russland, Kultur	Pies, Russia, culture	Koli Berge, See, Wappen	Koli Hills, lake, coat of arms
Noch nie gehört	Never heard	1. Urlaub war in Karelien, liegt nordöstlich u. hat wechselhafte Geschichte, Nähe Russland	First holiday was in Karelia, locates in Northeast and has versatile history, close to Russia
See, Wald, Ruhe	Lake, forest, peace	Koli Nationalpark, wunderschöne Natur	Koli National Park, wonderful nature
Pompatalo, Seen, Muuiko	Bomba House, lakes, vendace	Stille, Wald, Einsamkeit	Quiet, forest, loneliness
Natur, Bären, Seen	Nature, bears, lakes	Sehnsucht, Natur, Russland	Longing, nature, Russia
Wunderschöne Natur, Tolles Essen, Ruhe	Wonderful nature, good food, peace	Russland, natur, ost	Russia, nature, East
Natur, Backwaren, Fisch	Nature, bakery products, fish	Karelische Piroggen, Russland, Joensuu	Karelian pies, Russia, Joensuu
Bäume, Seen	Trees, lakes	Kalt, Piroggen, Kochen	Cold, pies, cooking
Schnee, Nordlicht, Landschaft	Snow, northern lights, landscape	Karelische Pirogge, Wald, Seen	Karelian pies, forest, lakes
Karelische Piroggen, Joensuu, Nationalpark	Karelian pies, Joensuu, national park	Karjalanpiirakka, Finnland, Unbekannt	Karelian pie, Finland, unknown

Schon dort gewesen, Schöne Landschaft, Karelische Sprache	I've been there already, beautiful landscape, Karelian	Koli, Piroggen, Russisch	Koli, pies, Russian
Russland, Traditionen, Wald	Russia, traditions, forest	Wälder, Seen, urig	Forests, lakes, rustic
Koli, Schnee, Weite	Koli, snow, wideness	Natur, Ruhe, Rentiere	Nature, peace, reindeer
TATORT (Tango für Borowski), Ruhe, Natur	Tatort: Tango für Borowski -movie, peace, nature	Beeren, Sauna, Hütte	Berries, sauna, cottage
Natur, Seen, gutes Essen	nature, lakes, good food	Piroggen, Einsamkeit, Waldrentiere	Pies, loneliness, forest reindeer
Landschaft, Sommer, Winter	Landscape, summer, winter	Wald, Seen, weite	Forests, lakes, wideness
Natur, Seen, Piroggen	Nature, lakes, pies	Natur, Wunderschön, Erlebnis	Nature, wonderful, experience
Seen, Wälder, Piroggen.	Lakes, forests, pies	Heimat, Familie, Kindheit	Home, family, childhood
Freiheit, Mökkiurlaub, Lieblingsmenschen	Freedom, cottage holiday, favorite people	Nightwish (Kitee), Joensuu, Pielinen	Nightwish (Kitee), Joensuu, Lake Pielinen
Schnee, Hundeschlitten, ewiger Sommer	Snow, dog sled, endless summer	Landschaft, Leute, Essen	Landscape, people, food
Koli, Pielinen, Geschichte	Koli, Lake Pielinen, history	Natur, Stille, Tradition	Nature, quiet, tradition
Karelische Piroggen, Joensuu, Osten	Karelian pies, Joensuu, east	Endlose Seen, Wälder, Ruhe	Endless lakes, forests, peace
Stromschnellen, Koli, Pielinen	Rapids, koli, Lake Pielinen	Tundra, Weihnachten, Russland	Tundra, Christmas, Russia
Schnee, Natur, Wald, Dunkelheit, Insomnium band	Snow, nature, forest, darkness, Insomnium band	Koli, Seenlandschaft, Piirakka	Koli, lake landscape, pie
Polarlichter, Schlittenfahrt, Iglu	Northern lights, sleigh ride, igloo	Karhun Polku, Eräkeskus, Rautavaara	Karhunpolku hiking trail, Wildernes Center, Rautavaara
Seenplatte, Saimaa-Ringelrobbe, pure Natur	Lake district, Saimaa ringed seal, pure nature	Wald, Seen, Koli	Forest, lakes, Koli
Amorphis, Karjalan Piirakka, Russland	Amorphis, Karelian pies, Russia	Ruhe, Wald, Erholung	Peace, forest, recreation
Koli, Joensuu, Iломанси	Koli, Joensuu, Iломанси	Viel Natur, Weite, Schnee	Lots of nature, wideness, snow
Piroggen, Wälder, Seen	Pies, forests, lakes	Seenplatte, Koli, Sommer	Lake district, Koli, summer

Landschaft, Fisch, See	Landscape, fish, lake	Piroggen, Russland, Krieg	Pies, Russia, war
Kälte, Nordlicht, Schnee	Cold, northern lights, snow	Schnee, Bären, Wald	Snow, bears, forest
Karjalanpiirakka, Bären, Tradition	Karelian pies, bears, tradition	Natur, Ruhe, Mökki	Nature, peace, cottage
Russland:), Blaubeeren, Bären	Russia :), blueberries, bears	Kainuu, russische Grenze, Susitaival	Kainuu, Russian border, Susitaival hiking trail
Natur, Angeln, Mökki	Nature, fishing, cottage	Koli, Joensu, Pielinen, Mökki	Koli, Joensuu, Lake Pielinen, cottage
Ruhe, See, Aussicht	Peace, lake, view	Nördlich, schön, Natur	Northern, beautiful, nature
Karelische Piroggen, Freiluftmuseum, Berge	Karelian pies, outdoor museum, mountains	Natur, Weite, Landschaft	Nature, wideness, landscape
Winterkrieg, Russland, Natur	The Winter War, Russia, nature	Karelien pies, Gebietsverlust 2WK, Seen	Karelian pies, lost of territory during the Second World War, lakes
Natur, Ruhe, Joensuu	Nature, peace, Joensuu	Russischegrenze, Joensuu, Pyhäselkä-See	Russian border, Joensuu, Lake Pyhäselkä
Schnee, piriggen	Snow, pies	Tolle Landschaft, gutes Essen, Ruhe und Erholung	Amazing landscape, good food, peace, recreation
Finnland, Natur, Ruhe	Finland, nature, peace	Sauna, Natur, Angeln	Sauna, nature, fishing
Joensuu, Landesgrenze, Russland	Joensuu, country border, Russia	Schnee, Karelische Sprache, Natur	Snow, Karelian, nature
Leider gar nichts	Unfortunately, nothing	Norden, Russland, Schnee	North, Russia, snow
Bär, Karhu, Schnee	Bear, bear, snow	Seen, Wälder, Natur	Lakes, forests, nature
Wald, Wildnis, Bären	Forest, wilderness, bears	Habe ich bisher noch nie gehört	I've never heard of it before
Natur Urlaub	Nature holiday	Natur, Ruhe, Winter	Nature, peace, winter
Schmuck, Kartoffeln, Schnee	Jewerly, potatoes, snow	Mittelfinnland, Grenzregion, dünn besiedelt	Middle Finland, border area, sparsely populated
Piroggen, Koli, Wald	Pies, Koli, forest	karelische Piroggen, früher russisch, Ostfinnland	Karelian pies, was before part of Russia, Eastern Finland

Kuolimo, Savitaipale, Repovesi	Kuolimo, Savitaipale, Repovesi	Piroggen, See, Rentier	Pies, lake, reindeer
Grenzgebiet zwischen Russland und Finnland, Koli Berge, See Pielinen	Border between Russia and Finland, Koli Hills, Lake Pielinen	Piroggen, Russland, Seen	Pies, Russia, lakes
Piroggen, Wald, Koli Nationalpark	Pies, forest, Koli National Park	Finnland, Provinz, Russland	Finland, province, Russia
Joensuu, Kitee, Ilomantsi	Joensuu, Kitee, Ilomantsi	Mökki, 2. Heimat, karjalanpiirakka	Cottage, second home, Karelian pie
Wälder, Berge, Piroggen	Forests, mountains, pies	Rentiere, Festival (il-lusaarirock) Natur	Reindeer, Ilosaarirock festival, nature
Karjala Bier, Koli Nationalpark, Landschaft	Karjala bier, Koli National Park, landscape	Ruhig, Rentiere, Ilosaarirock	Calm, reindeer, Ilosaarirock
Finnland, Russland, Natur	Finland, Russia, nature	Karelische Piroggen, Seen, Sommer	Karelian pies, lakes, summer
Ostfinnland, Joensuu, Koli	Eastern Finland, Joensuu, Koli	Bären, Seen, Wald	Bears, lakes, forest
Karelische Piroggen, Seen, Russland	Karelian pies, lakes, Russia	Winter, Piirakka, Seen	Winter, pie, lakes
Natur, Seen, Erholung	Nature, lakes, recreation	Wald, Seen, Piroggen	Forest, lakes, pies
Endlose Wälder, wilde Natur, Seenlandschaft	Endless forests, wild nature, lake landscape	Wunderschön, Wasser, Russland	Wonderful, water, Russia
Weite, Seen, Russland	Wideness, lakes, Russia	Piroggen, Koli, Wald	Pies, Koli, forest
Wald, See, Russland	Forest, lake, Russia	Wald, Seen, Holzkirchen	Forest, lakes, wooden church
Grenze, Geschichte, Karelische Kultur, karjalan piirakka, orthodox.	Border, history, Karelian culture, Karelian pies, Orthodox	Wandern in der Einsamkeit, Nationalparks, Piroggen	Hiking in loneliness, national parks, pies
Wald, Koli, Seen	Forest, Koli, lakes	Saima, Karjalanpiirakka, Mökki	Lake Saimaa, Karelian pie, cottage
Koli, Pielinen, Wald	Koli, Lake Pielinen, forest	Grenze, viel Wald, Geschichte	Border, lots of forest, history
Koli, Seen, Tolle Landschaften	Koli, lakes, amazing landscapes	Wald, Ruhe, Wald	Forest, peace, forest
Natur, Seen, Johensuu	Nature, lakes, Joensuu	Traumhafte Seen-Landschaft	Dreamy lake landscape
Pirogge, Wald, See	Pies, forest, lake	Finnland, Familie, Vertreibung	Finland, family, expulsion

Finnland, Landschaft, Weite	Finland, landscape, wideness	Grenze zu Russland	Russian border
Seen, Savolimma, Russland	Lakes, Savonlinna, Russia	Natur, Kultur, Grenze	Nature, culture, border
Pirogge, See, Russland	Pies, lake, Russia	Seen, Natur, Ruhe	Lakes, nature, peace
Karelische Piroggen, Nationalhymne	Karelian pies, national anthem	Wald, Bär, Russland	Forest, bear, Russia
Grenzland, viele Moore, viel Natur	Borderland, many swamps, lots of nature	Natur, Tradition, Nationalepos	Nature, tradition, National epic
Natur, saubere Luft, Seen, Russische Grenze	Nature, clean air, lakes, Russian border	Nichts	Nothing
Koli, Pielinen, Juuka	Koli, Lake Pielinen, Juuka	Ursprünglich, Piroggen, Volkssagen	Original, pies, folk tales
Piroggen, Wald, kanutour	Pies, forest, canoe tour	Piroggen, Nightwish, Tarja Turunen	Pies, Nightwish, Tarja Turunen
Pirakka, Koli, Pielinen	Pies, Koli, Lake Pielinen	Wald, Unabhängigkeitbewegungen, eigene Sprache	Forest, independence movements, own language
Landschaft, Essen, Kultur	Landscape, food, culture	See, Mücken, Urlaub	Lake, mosquitos, holiday
Teil Osten, Schnee	Part of east, snow	Weite, Ruhe, Landschaft	Wideness, peace, landscape
Wunderschöne Natur und Weite	Wonderful nature and wideness	Joensuu, Grenze zu Russland, Tolle Sommer	Joensuu, Russian border, amazing summer
Piirakkat	Pies	Seen, Blockhäuser, Blaubeeren	Lakes, log cabins, blueberries
Freundin	Girlfriend	Wald, Russische Grenze, Menschenleer	Forest, Russian border, deserted
Koli, Joensuu	Koli, Joensuu	Natur, Bären, Nightwish	Nature, bears, Nightwish
Natur, Dialekt, einige Gebiete gehören jetzt Russland (bin Mir nicht sicher)	Nature, dialect, some parts belongs now to Russia (I'm not sure)	Wald, Rentiere, Russland	Forest, reindeer, Russia