The island Viðoy in the Faroe Islands (Photographer: Nicoline H. Jensen)

DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT IN AN ISLAND STATE:

A case study about the Faroe Islands

Tourism Master Thesis

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Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to explore the concept of destination development in the Faroe Islands, and look at the possibilities and challenges in terms of turning the Faroe Islands into an all year-round tourism destination from local stakeholders' perspectives. This case study looks at tourism trends such as authenticity, remoteness, safety and security, as well as the influence of social media, which can help explain why a high number of tourists recently have been arriving in the Faroe Islands.

Moreover, this thesis looks at product innovation and tourism initiatives that is characteristics for the Faroe Islands, and which has helped or can help attract more tourists. For instance, the Sheep View campaign launched by VisitFaroeIslands has been a great success in the branding of the Faroe Islands as a destination. Other tourism initiatives include the focus on food tourism as well as hiking tourism. The aim of these initiatives is to help expand the season and to attract new segments, as a way to turn the Faroe Islands into an all year-round tourism destination. This is important in order to be a stronger destination, as well as to attract crucial investment. There are also numerous challenges in this context, due to the lack of natural resources, the amount of local stakeholders that should be considered, the lack of hotel capacity in the summer months, and the fragile nature.

The local stakeholders agree about the need for new legislation about the protection of the natural environment, and the new guidelines on Mykines can be seen as a step in the right direction. Moreover, in terms of expanding the season, where are all sort of challenges, because it first require that the Faroe Islands start to look at the destination as an all-year round destination instead of looking at it as a summer destination. Their own perceptions need to change first, in order for the tourists' perceptions to change. Additionally, there must also be a line between wanting more tourists to arrive, while still emphasising the importance of a quiet and remote destination, which is a tricky challenge Especially, as the majority look at Iceland as a scare story. Furthermore, the attraction of new segments e.g. foodies and hikers will require new tourism initiatives, because younger tourists require more action-based offers. Another segment VisitFaroeIslands focus on is business tourists, because they can arrive outside the summer months, but they also require activities, which is a challenge, because right now there is not enough capacity for such activities to function outside the summer months.

There are several possibilities in terms of turning the Faroe Islands into an all-year round destination, but there are significant challenges to consider in this context.

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Introduction

"Islands are a top destinations for millions of tourists each year. Their special geographical situation and their natural and cultural heritage richness make them unique for visitors, but at the same time, confront them with a number of challenges and vulnerabilities" (www.unwto.org)

This thesis seeks to investigate and understand tourism development in the Faroe Islands, and will take a closer look into the challenges and vulnerabilities that the country is facing in this context. The Faroe Islands are a fascinating small archipelago with a rich history and a cultural heritage that is different than the other Nordic countries, and only recently has tourism been regarded as a major industry, which is why it makes an interesting case study.

Generally, there has been increasing attention on Nordic and Arctic destinations throughout recent years, and the Faroe Islands fall under both categories. Currently, there is a great focus on tourism development in the Faroe Islands, as well as focus on strengthening the potential of the country as a tourist destination. Furthermore, tourism is something that contributes more and more to the Faroese economy, the National Tourism Council wants the tourism sector to be a significant contributor to the Faroese economy (Appendix 1, l. 128). There are many challenges regarding tourism development in the Faroe Islands, as the available natural resources are limited, which makes destination development more demanding. Currently, the Faroe Islands is foremost a summer destination, in order for the tourism sector to become a stable economic contribution to the Faroese economy, it has to be an all-year round destination, but this transition also involves some challenges. Different factors such as strong local networks, the involvement of the local community, as well as local initiatives can play an important role in tourism development, especially in a remote destination as the Faroe Islands, which is also something that this thesis will look into.

These initial considerations have resulted in the following problem formulation and sub questions:

What are the challenges and possibilities of turning the Faroe Islands into an all-year around tourist destination?

- What strategies do different stakeholders use in order to protect the Faroese nature and culture, while they also want to attract more tourists?
- What are the aims and objectives of the stakeholders in terms of tourist development in the Faroe Islands?

1. Motivations

My motivations for writing this thesis came from the desire to look at a tourist destination that is relatively new, as it would give me the opportunity to investigate the challenges and different scenarios that are at stake when developing a new destination. I wanted to look at a destination within close proximity to Denmark, because it was important to me that I could go to the destination and put myself in the tourist's place, and thus experience the destination on a closer range. Island destinations have always fascinated me, because they are a close unit and therefore they have some additional challenges in terms of tourism development. Putting all these criteria together, I immediately felt that the Faroe Islands would be an interesting destination to investigate. Moreover, the Faroe Islands are a burning platform that has some noteworthy characteristics, which are interesting to look into as well e.g. limitations in terms of natural resources, limitations in terms of capacity, a small population, and a fragile nature.

As a researcher it was important for me to be able to put myself in the tourist's place, in order to have an even experience that could provide me with reliable insights that could contribute to this project. How can I add to this area of research that I do not have much prior knowledge of? As a researcher I believe that my most important task is to retrieve useable knowledge and data that I can critical investigate and put into a proper context, and then make sincere and analytical observations about destination development in the Faroe Islands.

2. Methodology

2.1 Introduction

This chapter shows the methodological considerations, such as the methods and techniques used to collect and analyse data in order to address the problem formulation of this thesis. Firstly, the emphasis of this chapter will be on explaining phronetic social science that is used in this project, as well as the project's methodological considerations.

Secondly, the use of a case study in social science and case study research method is introduced, in addition to why and how social science matters. Furthermore, this chapter will also introduce qualitative research method, as well as introducing the interviewees and explain the connection and why they are interesting for this project. Thirdly, systematic coding and the analysis techniques that are used throughout this project will also be presented. Lastly, in order to demonstrate a critical

approach to the methodology used in this project, a reflection about this project's limitations and validity is discussed.

2.2 Why Social Science Matter

Phronetic social science is based on interpretations and is therefore open to testing. The discussion of social science is also important in this context, as social science for some scientists is a second-rate version of the hard science. As argued by Bent Flyvbjerg (2011), "we should promote social science that are strong when natural science is weak – that is, in reflexive analysis and deliberation about values and interests aimed at praxis, which are essential to social and economic development in society" (p. 38). There are significant distinctions between epistemic social science and phronetic social science, as the epistemic model "finds it ideal in the natural science model for doing science" (Flyvbjerg, 2011, p. 39), whereas the phronetic model "takes its point of departure in the fact that despite centuries of trying the natural science model it still does not work in social science" (Flyvbjerg, 2011, p. 39). Phronetic social science engages the public sphere, and not only the science when conducting research. The two different models look at social science and social scientists differently, as the epistemic social science sees

> "social scientists and social science professionals as technocrats who – through their insight into social theories and laws – may provide society with solutions to its social ills. [Whereas] the phronetic model sees social scientists and social science professionals as analysts who produce food for thought for the ongoing process of public deliberation, participation and decision making" (Flyvbjerg, 2011, p. 39).

This thesis takes its departure in phronetic social science, as the principal objective for this type of social science is to comprehend values and interests and how they relate to each other in practical circumstances. This thesis will follow Flyvbjerg's (2011) point of departure for this type of social science and asks the following four value-rational questions that will guide the research throughout the project: "1) Where are we going? 2) Who gains and who loses, and by which mechanisms of power? 3) Is this development desirable? 4) What, if anything, should we do about it?" (p. 40). As suggested by Flyvbjerg (2011), these four questions have been addressed and as a result by using different methodologies research has been developed, as "phronetic social science is *problem-driven*, not methodological driven" (p. 40). Hence, the most important thing has been to arrive to a point where social science deals with deliberation, judgement and praxis in relation to the answers that the four questions have provided.

As a researcher I have put myself in the field. Therefore, I have not looked at this case, as somebody standing on the outside looking in; instead I have put myself in the field of research. I have not been objective or behaved like I was invincible in this process. Everybody I met or talked to throughout my stay at the Faroe Islands knew what I was doing there, so I did not have any hidden agenda. I do not consider this to be a problem and I do not believe that this project lack value, because it is made up of interpretations. Knowledge and interpretations is ongoing processes where there are no right or wrong answers. If there is a "better" way of explaining the phenomenon the new interpretation replaces the old (Flyvbjerg, 2005), especially as the aim is not to provide the right answers or ultimate knowledge. The goal is rather to provide input to dialogue and praxis. This thesis therefore does not have the final say on what is wrong or right within the tourism industry in the Faroe Islands, because as the world is complex there are no simple explanations. This thesis tries to capture as much of this complexity as possible and yet knowing it is impossible to capture everything. Capturing different perspectives such as interviews, articles and other available material is a way of grasping as much as possible. "Reflexivity is commonly used in qualitative research and has been posited and accepted as a method qualitative researchers can and should use to legitimize, validate, and question research practices and representation" (Pillow, 2003, p. 175). As a researcher I am therefore very self-aware of my role and how I can impact the project and the research area.

2.3 The Philosophy of Science and Qualitative Research

This section will address the phenomenological tradition in tourism research, and how it is applied in this thesis. As this thesis is based on qualitative research, this section will try to clarify this topic under the general classification of philosophy of science.

Regarding the phenomenological tradition in tourism research, Martin Trandberg Jensen, Caroline Scarles, and Scott A. Cohen (2015) argue that,

> "phenomenology has been widely used with the aim of exploring the
> meanings, understandings and textual interpretations constituting the
> phenomena under study (Pernecky & Jamal, 2010), [and] thereby
> attempting to "reveal some enlightening … insights… through a systematic
> attempt to uncover and describe the structures and the meanings of a lived
> experience" (pp. 62-63).

Thus, this approach uncovers the apparent significances through interviews or other methods, and as a result it highlights the respondents reflections regarding the research topic. Moreover, the

characters of social constructivism use phenomenology with the purpose of categorising the constructions of symbolic meaning and sociocultural significances (Jensen et al., 2015). Hence, "a majority of tourism phenomenologies currently carry a trace of representationalism … through which the key focus is on what things symbolise – what they denote and connote, what codes they inform, what values they defer and refer to" (Jensen et al., 2015, p.63). Thus, this thesis follows the traditional phenomenological approach in tourism research, as this thesis use participant observations and interviews as the main research methods. Furthermore, as argued by Flyvbjerg (2006),

> "if one assumes that research, like other learning processes, can be
> described by the phenomenology of human learning, it then becomes clear
> that the most advanced form of understanding is achieved when researchers
> place themselves within the context of being studied. Only in this way can
> researchers understand the viewpoints and behaviour, which characterizes
> social actors" (p. 236).

As Flyvbjerg points out one of the most important elements regarding human learning is for the researcher to place him or herself within the context of being studied, in order to comprehend the different components within the research topic. This perception can also be used as an argument for the use of a case study. Moreover, this particular approach is good in this specific case, as there are many complex factors at play in a destination like the Faroe Islands. This specific approach can highlight and investigate them in a desirable manner.

Hancock et al. (2007) argue, "qualitative research is concerned with developing explanations of social phenomena" (p. 7). Thus, qualitative research helps the human being to understand the social world in which we live, and why things are the way they are (Hancock et al., 2007). Furthermore, when using qualitative research it is important to look at the subjectivity of the research. Hancock et al. (2007) refer to James Scotland (2012), "it is important to understand the underlying ontological and epistemological assumptions behind each piece of research" (p.9). Especially, as both assumptions are important elements within the philosophy of knowledge. As argued by Michael Crotty (1998) in Hancock et al. (2007), "ontology is the study of being" (p.10). Hence, ontological assumptions are focused on what reality is constituted by, and in other words what is. As a researcher using qualitative research one needs to look at how things really are and how things really work. According to Hancock et al. (2007), "epistemology is concerned with the nature and

forms of knowledge" (p.7), and as argued by Scotland (2012) in Hancock et al. (2007), "epistemological assumptions are concerned with how knowledge can be created, acquired and communicated, in other words *what it means to know*" (p.9). Thus, the ontological and epistemological elements have clear distinctions. This thesis investigates and interprets the research topic in different ways, which always influence the outcome, as different perceptions can influence change in the social context. Particularly, as different researchers can have diverse conclusions for the same observation, which is important to consider.

2.4 Human Learning and the use of a Case Study

As this thesis is build up around a case study, it is important to understand the role of cases and theory in human learning. Bent Flyvbjerg (2006) has two points about this;

> "First, the case study produces the type of context-dependent knowledge that research on learning shows to be necessary to allow people to develop from rule-based beginners to virtuoso expects. Second, in the study of human affairs, there appears to exist only context-dependent knowledge, which, thus, presently rules out the possibility of epistemic theoretical construction" (p.221).

Flyvbjerg (2006) argues that if these two points are correct, then it has significant consequences for the use of the case study in both teaching and research. Furthermore, Flyvbjerg (2006) points out that, "phenomenological studies of human learning indicate that for adults, there exist a qualitative leap in their learning process from the rule-governed use of analytical rationality in beginners to the fluid performance of tacit skills in what … Hubert Dreyfus and Stuart Dreyfus (1986) called true human expects" (p. 222). Flyvbjerg (2006) argues that in common for all experts, no matter the area, is that they build their expertise on the basis of knowledge of thousands concrete cases, and moreover, "context-dependent knowledge and experience are at the very heart of expert activity. Such knowledge and expertise also lie at the center of the case study as a research and teaching method or to put it more generally still, as a method of learning" (p.222). Additionally, Flyvbjerg (2006) stresses that, "it is only because of experience with cases that one can at all move from being a beginner to being an expect. If people were exclusively trained in context-independent knowledge and rules, that is, the kind of knowledge that forms the basis of textbooks and computers, they would remain at the beginner's level in the learning process" (p.222). Hence, taking Flyvbjerg's arguments and reasoning into consideration, the use of a case study can be extremely beneficial for human learning. Nevertheless, Flyvbjerg's argumentation for the use of case study does not rule out rule-based knowledge, as Flyvbjerg (2006) argues, "there is a need for both approaches" (p.223).

Flyvbjerg (2006) also points out the importance and closeness of a case study to real-life situations and the many details it entails, for instance,

> "it is important for the development of a nuanced view of reality, including the view that human behaviour cannot be meaningfully understood as simply the rule-governed acts found at the lowest levels of the learning process and in much theory. Second, cases are important for researcher's own learning processes in developing the skills needed to do good research" (p.223).

As this project examines the complex field of tourism in the Faroe Islands as a single case study, and following Flyvbjerg's argumentation about the importance of cases, this project can be used to highlight the tourism reality regarding development in the Faroe Islands. Since this case study can investigate both the negative and positive sides of tourism development in the Faroe Islands.

2.5 Data Collection and Method

In order to investigate the different local tourism stakeholders´ perspectives on tourism development in the Faroe Islands, my initial aim was to do participant observations and put myself in the field by spending time in the Faroe Islands, which would give my great and valuable insights that otherwise would be impossible to gain from a distance. Secondly, my goal was to conduct research interviews with some of the local stakeholders, as I believe that the flexibility of an interview makes it an appropriate additional research method to use besides participant observation, in order to answer the complex research question of this thesis.

The following section will introduce participant observation and conversations, which I used as my primary method in order to retrieve valuable data for this data. The section will also introduce the interview guide that I used when interviewing the interviewees.

2.6 Research Design

As this thesis is about tourism development in the Faroe Islands, and as mentioned above my first goal was to be able to go to the Faroe Islands, in order to position myself in the fieldwork location. I knew it was important for me to go to the Faroe Islands in order to gain the most valuable insights, and in order to talk with as many people as possible. As a Danish national living in Copenhagen, I had no prior knowledge about the Faroe Islands, apart from what I have seen or heard through friends and social media. However, as I mentioned previously, the Faroe Islands as a relatively new

destination is an interesting case to investigate. Especially as it also is an isolated island with many challenges and issue related to tourism development.

Thus, my point of departure to this project has been without any preconceptions and prejudice before going to the Faroe Islands. Prior to my departure, I gained more knowledge about the Faroe Islands through my desk research, I regard this as beneficial for this project, as it enabled me to ask functional questions to the people I met. My initial aim was to talk and engage with anyone I met on my trip to the Faroe Islands, and I manage to do just that. I followed Edward Bruner's (2005) way of engaging in touristic inquiry, as his second location for his fieldwork has been "at the tourist destination – the villages, staged performances, heritage sites and other attractions, the places the tourists go to see, the ones listed in the guidebooks" (p. 16). Just as Bruner I was both mobile and stationary during my research trip, as I was shifting between staying in my rented apartment in Torshavn and driving around in my rented car.

Bruner (2005) states that the importance of being in the field is for the researcher to be able to understand what the tourists are facing there, for instance "some of the questions here are which aspects of local culture are presented to tourists and which are omitted, who profits from tourism enterprises, what are the consequences of the tourist inflow on the indigenous culture, and who has the power to tell which story about the tourists attractions" (p. 16). These were also some of the questions that I asked myself and considered before going into the field, especially as there are many different interpretations to consider. Furthermore, Bruner (2005) argues "I have learned from my studies that tourists attractions are almost always contested and that the contestation is not only between different players, say between the government and the locals, but within groups, so there may be conflicting interpretations among various segments of the local society" (2005, p. 19). As Bruner, I felt that it was important for me to study the meanings of the Faroe Islands and to understand the perspectives of all relevant local stakeholders. In this context, the combination of Bruner's (2005) importance of going into the field and Flyvbjerg's (2006) emphasis on the use of a case study, this thesis will be able to look into different issues in the Faroe Islands. For instance, initially, I wondered how sustainability in terms of tourism development played any part according to the local stakeholders. This research design made it possible to answer this question, which will be elaborated later.

As I only had one opportunity to stay in the Faroe Islands, due to logistical and financial challenges, I wanted to spend my time there productive. Therefore, I had structured my time before arriving in

the country, but my calendar was not so strict that it was not open for any free time or last minute change of plans. As I placed myself in the middle of the field, I certainly did participant observation, which will be elaborated in section 2.8.

2.7 Desk Research

This thesis relies on primary sources; and the main aim of this project has been to go to the Faroe Islands and collect data by do participant observations, as well as making interviews with local stakeholders. However, as this project started weeks before the departure to the Faroe Island, it gave me the opportunity to look at other tourism sources, and discover how this data describe and analyse tourism on the Faroe Islands. In order to find useful sources, I had to adapt a search strategy in order to retrieve the relevant data, especially as there is so much data available online. I used the search strategy as outlined by Hox and Boeiji (2005),

> "after a data set that looks attractive has been located, the next step is to
> obtain a more detailed description of the study. Well-documented data sets
> come with a detailed description of the methods and procedures used to
> collect the data. (…) All this information may be needed to judge whether
> the secondary data suit the present research problem" (p. 594).

Hence, I tried to remain critical towards the sources that I looked at in order to obtain a wide-ranging and analytical understanding of the tourism industry in the Faroe Islands. Moreover, this data gave me new insights into the tourism sector in the Faroe Islands, which was helpful in the processes before my departure to the Faroe Islands. Throughout my desk research, I discovered who the local stakeholders in the Faroe Islands are, and thereby it helped me to determine what people I should talk with. Moreover, it gave me a better understanding of the tourism industry in the Faroe Islands, as I was able to look deeper into the structure of the entire industry.

2.8 Participant Observation and Conversations

During my time in the Faroe Islands, I used participant observation and conversations as my primary methods, and they fall under a very broad umbrella of fieldwork research. Additionally, I also made interviews with different local stakeholders, which will be elaborated in section 2.11. According to Dwyer et al. (2012), "participant observation consists of engaging in regular and prolonged interaction with the people the researcher seeks to study – immersing oneself in the participants' local environment – in order to learn more about obvious and not-so-obvious aspects of their lives and culture" (p. 377). As a researcher using participant observation I put myself in a

position where I could observe and take part in a variety of different activities, interactions, observations etc. Also, as argued by Dwyer et al. (2012),

> "by observing and participating in daily life as much as possible, the
> researcher is able to overcome participants' natural distrust towards
> outsiders, becomes part of the living landscape and as a result is able to
> collect a myriad of data that would be impossible to obtain otherwise. Thus
> the researcher is saddled with a dual task: she is at the same time the
> investigator and the data collection instrument" (p. 377).

Moreover, as this specific kind of qualitative research was combined with interviews, conversations and notes, as suggested by Dwyer et al. (2012), "participant data arises primarily from field notes of what the researcher observed and participates in, as well as his interpretation of the events that occurred (Emerson et al., 1995). The field notes are then compiled, analysed, and contrasted with data acquired through other means" (p.377). Furthermore, there are different categories of observant participation, which depend on the goals of the research, as well as

> "the researcher's intentions/skills, [and then] the researcher will adopt one
> of four postures in the field that correspond to different levels of
> involvement between the researcher and the research participants. Thus, the
> researcher may choose to exclusively observe, taking no part in what is
> going on; or he may participate to a small extent; he may also choose to a
> greater degree; or lastly, the researcher may become a complete participant
> and thus virtually indistinguishable from those he seeks to study" (Dwyer et
> al., 2012, p. 379).

At the Faroe Island while doing research I was mostly observing, however, as I also did numerous hiking trips, took some ferries, did grocery shopping, hang out at the tourists information etc., Therefore, I participated on a small scale in the everyday activities in the Faroe Islands. This allowed me to gain valuable insights about tourism in the Faroe Islands.

There are many advantages and some disadvantages of doing participant observation. One of the advantages is that "participant observation offers tourism researchers the experience and insight needed to make valid statements based on locally produced (i.e. emic) knowledge. Moreover, participant observation gives the researcher the opportunity to obtain "a general understanding of how any social institution of organisation works" (Bernard, 2002, p. 355)" (Dwyer et al., 2012,

p.384). Additionally, the important knowledge that the researcher gain through observant participation is crucial in order to achieve a versatile project, as "this first-hand experience, knowledge and understanding of the group's culture, coupled with an intimate knowledge of the research site, are critical components of the foundation needed to obtain an expert knowledge of the field" (Dwyer et al., 2012, p. 384). This was easily translated into something that I experienced numerous times while I was in the Faroe Islands, e.g. that initiatives are coming from above in the Faroese tourism industry. This is not something that is ground-breaking for the local population, as they are used to it. They actually expect it, which is knowledge that I could not have understood if I have not experienced it first-hand.

There are also some disadvantages by using participant observation as a solo research method, as "exclusive reliance on participant observation methods instead of more holistic/mixed methods approaches may hinder the success of tourism planning and development initiatives [furthermore] it would be a crucial error to suggest and/or enforce tourism policies based solely on data obtained via the researcher's observations and actions in the field" (Dwyer et al., 2012, p. 386). As this project is built upon different research methods, and as this project offers no suggestions to tourism planning or development initiatives, this method can be measured as a disadvantage in this context. However, there must be a fine balance, as it is difficult only to consume and analyse knowledge and not to produce it. Therefore, this project will try to equalize it.

Apart from using participant observation as a research method, I also used conservations as a reliable research method while I was in the Faroe Islands during my fieldwork. I used the conservations in order to talk with more people on the Faroe Islands without having to set up an interview with them. Thus, it gave me additional perspectives and insights than I could not have otherwise gained by just doing participant observations or interviews. Moreover, it gave me the opportunity to talk with a huge variety of people living in the Faroe Islands, and thereby I also had the opportunity to talk with people who are not directly involved in the tourism industry. For instance I had the opportunity to talk with a teacher, a farmer, a ferryman, and many more. Surprisingly, many had specific interests and viewpoints about tourism in the Faroe Islands, and there were particular themes that everyone talked about, e.g. the protection of the nature, and the fine line between wanting more tourists, but not to many. Informal conservation is a very usable method, when doing tourism research, as "conversations are an excellent research methodology for

revealing the confines and ambiguities involved in holiday-taking" (Swarbrooke & Horner, 2007, p.159).

All of the people I talked with had interesting ideas and views about tourism in the Faroe Islands, and without these conservations I would not have been able to gain such a wide-range of knowledge from so many different people. As argued by Swarbrooke and Horner (2007),

> "free-ranging conversations are an important resource for researchers. They confirm the nature of the tourist experience, and whether the concerns identified by researcher (involved in the) project are indeed the concerns of those questioned… Research that denies the opportunity for holidaymakers to speak of their own experience in their own words is itself limited" (p.159).

Therefore, it was important for me as a researcher to include and have these informal conservations with as many people as I could, because it would give me a real impression of the tourist experiences in the Faroe Islands, and this was one of the main aims of this project.

2.9 Case Study in the field

> "I view tourist performances as secular rituals, to be studied as such. In addition to the tourists, the actors here are the performers, the locals, tour agents, travel guides, business persons, officials in the national tourists bureaus, as well as those representing the airlines, hotels, and other international stakeholders in the tourist industry" (Bruner, 2005, p. 19).

Following Edward Bruner's argumentation I chose to study and talk with many people in the Faroe Islands during my field trip, and I did that in order to get as broad a description and impression of the country as possible. This case study is ethnographic, as it is a combination of Bruner and Flyvbjerg's methods in terms of tourism research. Following Bruner's argumentation that it is important for the researcher to put oneself into the tourist setting, and following Flyvbjerg's argumentation of the importance of a case study, this project will use this acknowledgement to try to make a versatile project.

While many working within the tourism industry can be of the same opinions regarding specific tourist matters, locals often have another impressions of the same matters, and I regard their opinions as much as the opinions of the people working in the industry. As a result of this acknowledgement, I tried to talk with everyone I met while I was in the Faroe Islands, and I did not

meet one that was not interested in talking to me, and their different perceptions have been extremely giving for this project.

2.10 Interview Guide

From the outset the aim of this project has been to understand the aims and objectives for tourism development in the Faroe Islands. Through the individuals chosen for the interviews, the project has gained an insight to the issues currently at hand in the Faroe Islands through their eyes. Therefore, the questions they were asked have played a crucial role, as certain questions construct certain answers. In order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the tourism industry in the Faroe Islands, I chose to use interviews as my main research technique, because it can be very effective in a case like this, as pointed by Dwyer et al. (2012), "as with most qualitative techniques, interviewing is especially effective when the research question at hand requires depth and specificity. This method is well-suited for issue-oriented research questions or problems" (p. 365). Moreover, instead of doing traditional, survey-based quantitative studies, the interviews gave the interviewees an important voice, which otherwise sometimes are marginalized in the traditional survey (Dwyer et al., 2012). Furthermore, as stated by Dwyer et al. (2012), "tourism industry stakeholders are often very busy people, but they also tend to be immersed and involved in their work, and as such are eager to share their thoughts" (p.366). This was exactly the experience that I gained while in the Faroe Islands, as everyone was very eager to talk with me. However, I also experienced some rejections prior to my departure to the Faroe Islands, because some people I wrote emails to about the possibility of an interview, rejected the idea, because they were too busy.

As the interviews are made based on the research method of phronetic social science, and the four value rational questions, as proposed by Bent Flyvbjerg (2005) have been used throughout this project. The use of narratives in this project has been essential, and as such the interviews conducted throughout this process have been fundamental, according to Dwyer et all (2012), "some argue that the original paradigm of human inquiry and the archetypical research method is, in fact, the act of conversation between two people (Heron, 1981)" (p. 365). Moreover, interviewing includes a wide range of techniques, "spanning from highly structured, standardized, and closed question, to unstructured, open-ended conversations" (Dwyer et all, 2012, p.365). Although, there have been great examples of the use of the interview technique as a standalone method for a specific study, this thesis, along with many others, uses a multi-method study. As pointed by Dwyer et al. (2012), "this is commonly utilized in the ethnographic approach, whereby researchers

combine participant observation, field dairies, conversations, systematic lurking, and/or other qualitative methods with in-depth interviews (Fetterman, 1998)" (pp. 366-367).

Before going to the Faroe Islands I anticipated that I probably would have to conduct different kinds of interviews, due to the various scenarios, but as a guideline I used the two main types in qualitative research, which are "the unstructured interview and the semi-structured interview" (Bryman, 2008, p. 436). The distinction between these two kinds of interviews lies in the different approaches taken by the interviewer. In the semi-structured interview the researcher "has a list of questions or fairly specific topics to be covered, often referred to as an interview guide, but the interviewee has a great deal of leeway in how to reply" (Bryman, 2008, p. 438). Moreover, in the semi-structured interview, the questions are not necessarily asked the way they initially were outlined. Furthermore, the interviewer is free to ask the questions he or she wants to follow up on as the interview progresses, "questions that are not included in the guide may be asked as the interviewer picks up on things said by the interviewees" (Bryman, 2008, p. 438). The almost totally unstructured interview is different, as the researcher "uses at most a aide-memoire as brief set of prompts to him- or herself to deal with a certain range of topics" (Bryman, 2008, p. 438). As the focus of this project has been clear from the beginning, as I have considered some specific issues that I wanted this project to address, which make semi-structured interview a preferred method for this project.

The formation of an interview is a crucial part of the preparation before interviewing, according to Bryman (2008), as it is important to ask interview questions that can help answers the research question, without making the questions in the interview too apparent. Moreover, as mentioned previously, I followed the four value-rational questions asked by Bent Flyvbjerg (2005) as my guideline. My initial aim was to ask the interviewees specific questions following these three steps: 1) What are your visions about tourism development? 2) How do you act? 3) What is the situation on the Faroe Island in a decade? And what do you do to get there? Naturally, I asked the interviewees more questions than these three, but they were my main guidelines in my method of using semi-structured interview.

There are both advantages and limitation of using interviews as a method, when conducting tourism research. The advantages of interviewing is that it is "adaptable to a wide range of themes and

topics … can provide background for studies using multiple methods, can create rich, descriptive data and illustrative examples of the human experience, the iterative nature of interviewing can ensure its validity and accuracy" (Dwyer et al., 2012, p. 371). Some of the limitations to the interviewing technique include:

> "poor data quality if the possible power differentials and status differences (including class, gender, race and ethnicity) between the researcher and the informant are not taken into consideration, the time-consuming nature of the method, both the interviewing process itself as well as the pre-interview process, which includes conceptualizing the research problem, gaining entre with informants, scheduling interviews, and the post-interview transcription and analysis" (ibid.).

However, there are a number of strategies that can be used in order to maximize the advantages and minimize the disadvantages of interviews as a research method, and they include: "appropriate selection of the sample or panel, the role of triangulation and other methods of trustworthiness, finding the appropriate length and structure for the interview… applying active listening techniques and taking advantage of the iterative nature of interviewing" (Dwyer et al., 2012, p. 371). Hence, the interviewees were extremely open and willing to talk to me, and they gave me all the time that I needed in order to conduct the interviews. Moreover, as I have applied other methods besides interviews, such as participant observation, I firmly believe that the interviews used in this thesis are trustworthy. I selected the interviewees after doing desk research, because through this research I gained valuable knowledge about the field, and therefore I was able to select the most suitable four candidates to interview. The reasons for why I chose these specific four people will be elaborated in the next section.

2.11 Local Stakeholders in the Faroe Islands

Before going to the Faroe Islands, I began to investigate whom I wanted to interview while I was up there. Initially, I wanted to interview people with distinctive job descriptions in the Faroese tourism industry, in order to understand the industry and as a result I was able to pick up valuable perspectives. I chose to only interview four people, because I believe from my desk research that they represent a broad and respected part of the Faroese tourism industry. I could have chosen to interview more people than these four, but as participant observation and conversations were my primary methods, I chose not to interview too many people. In this specific case I believe that participant observation is a great primary method, while the interviews are a great supplement, but

they are not the primary method. However, I used the interviews to gain more knowledge about the different themes and concepts, as well as the different patterns that are present in the Faroese tourism industry. The interviews provided me with many details about these specific themes and patterns, which is something that I could not have gained by just doing participant observations and conversations. This is also why that the interviews prove to be a valuable and trustworthy secondary method, as I was able to investigate the themes in depth.

Initially, in my search for the best possible candidates to interview in the Faroe Islands, I began by searching online. Quickly I realized the importance of being able to interview someone from VisitFaroeIslands, as I assumed that the National Tourism Council is a frontrunner in the Faroese tourism industry. Therefore, Guðrið (Guri) Højgaard, who is the Director of Visit Faroe Islands, was one of the first people that I sent an email to. She was very willing to talk to me, so we sat up an interview rather quickly. Other than Guri Højgaard, I also hoped to be able to talk with someone in the political system on the Faroe Islands; specifically I wanted to talk to someone who worked in the department, where tourism was placed. As tourism lies within different departments in different countries, it says a lot about how tourism is comprehended in different countries, which is extremely interesting. In the Faroe Islands tourism lies within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and luckily I was able to set up an interview with Jóhan Pauli Helgason, who works there as an adviser, and who has tourism as one of his areas of expertise.

Apart from gaining the perception of tourism from VisitFaroeIslands as well as the political system, my initial aim was also to talk with travel agencies, who has the direct contact with the tourists, and thereby could provide me with another set of perspectives. My hope was to be able to talk with several travel agencies, and hopefully at least two agencies of different sizes in order to gain different perspectives. Therefore I contacted several travel agencies, all of them based on the Faroe Islands, which were another criteria of mine. I managed to set up interviews with two different travel agencies, Make Travel and GreenGate Incoming. Make Travel is a relatively small travel agency with only two employees, whereas GreenGate Incoming is a larger travel agency with nine employees.

These four different interviewees have sufficiently covered the themes, concepts, and patterns that have been valuable to this project. As a result, the interviews have provided great insights in terms of the local stakeholders' different perceptions of destination development in the Faroe Islands.

Interviewees	Interview date and time
Guðrið Højgaard, Director of Visit Faroe Islands	29th of March, 10 AM, 2017
Jóhan Pauli Helgason, adviser at Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade	30th of March, 12 AM, 2017
Kent Lindquist Christensen, owner of Make Travel	3rd of April, 10 AM, 2017
Friðun Jacobsen, owner and CEO of GreenGate Incoming	3rd of April, 12 AM, 2017

2.12 Coding the Interviews

In order to code the interviews in the best possible way, I used Herbert J. Rubin and Irene S. Rubin's (2012) guide in order to create high-quality coding that makes the interviews is clear and complete for interpretation. According to Rubin & Rubin (2012), "analysis in the responsive interviewing model proceeds in two phases. In the first, you prepare transcripts; find, refine, and elaborate concepts, themes, and events; and then code the interviews to be able to retrieve what the interviewees have said about the identified concepts, themes and events" (p. 201). As suggested by Rubin & Rubin (2012), one can choose to follow several paths when coding the interviews; "you can compare concepts and themes across the interviews or combine separate events to formulate a description of the setting. In doing so, you seek to answer your research question in ways that allow you to draw broader theoretical conclusions" (p. 201).

Additionally, Rubin & Rubin (2012) draw some guiding characteristics of data analysis in responsive interviewing, for instance that the analysis starts already during the research, as

> "analysis begin early on when you examine the first few interviews to make
> sure your project makes sense and concerns matters important to your
> conversational partners. As you complete each interview, you examine its
> content to see what you have now learned and what you still need to find
> out" (p. 202).

They continue to describe that after the interviews have been completed, "you then examine all the

interviews together to pull out coherent and consistent descriptions, themes, and theories that speak to your research question" (Rubin & Rubin, 2012, p. 202). In this process of coding the interviews used in this thesis, I decided to divide them into different themes, which will be elaborated later in this section.

I transcribed all the recordings, and as with anything there are also different types of transcripts in terms of how they differ in their precision. As I did not have to analyse the use of language or monitor any psychological responses, I did not have to get down on paper exactly what was said, "including grammatical errors, digression, abrupt changes of focus, profanity, exclamations, and other indications of mood such as laughter or tears" (Rubin & Rubin, 2012, p. 204). Instead, I followed the guidelines described by Rubin & Rubin (2012), "we put into the transcript only the level of detail we are likely to analyze and include any information that might influence the interpretations, such as laughter or gestures of emphasis or puzzlement" (p. 204), which are easier to remember when you transcribe the interviews shortly after you have done them, which was exactly what I did. Additionally, while I was doing the transcriptions, I took notes during and afterwards that I believed could be relevant in terms of what themes and concepts I could include in the final analysis, which prove to be very helpful later on in the coding- and writing process. Especially, as I then had a working idea of what important themes and concepts each interview entailed. Hence, during the coding process I labeled concepts and themes so that I later could easily retrieve and examine all of the data that refer to the same subject across all of my interviews. As described by Rubin & Rubin (2012), "the overall relationship between the codes is called a coding structure [and] the decisions the researcher make when coding largely what he or she will be able to conclude during the analysis" (p.204). Thus, I am aware of what kind of coding structure I have established for my analysis in this thesis, but as a researcher that is what can be expected, as I organize and analyze the interviews. Hence, in the analysis I look systematically for similarities and differences between the interviewees within the different themes, concepts and patterns. They were for instance, the need for immediate protection of the Faroese nature, the struggle between wanting more tourists to come while still wanting to protect the island for being misused as a destination, as well as challenges related to natural resources and the islands' capacity. All these themes will be elaborated and analysed in the analysis.

2.13 Limitations and Validity

The topic of this thesis renders many interesting and unlimited directions to take. In this section, I will acknowledge some of the choices that I have excluded in this project, in order to maintain a more narrow focus to fit within the scope of this thesis.

The approach to the methods chosen in this thesis has been pinpointed as an ideal way to get natural responses from both interviewees and people I talked with in general, and I have relied on their connection to the subject in order to get honest inputs from them. However, one potential pitfall can be identified as the researcher's unsystematic interpretations on what inputs from the research are to be considered significant (Bryman, 2008). Therefore, open-ended questions may be seen to only give open answers, wherefrom the researcher will choose a specific area to focus on. It is often the overlooked inputs that can lead the reader of the writings to think about the stories that are not being told, and thus think about why certain areas have been overlooked throughout the process. Therefore it is significant to consider the obtainment of the writer. If the researcher follows the methodical qualitative approach, then the existence of transcripts, observations, conversation, field notes, and data analysis etc. can at minimum provide a resource for potential alternative angles in future research.

Flyvbjerg (2006) argues that there are several misunderstandings about case studies, and he argues that a case study can be use to more than generating hypotheses, and that the use of a case study can contribute to scientific development. If research is described by the phenomenology of human learning it becomes clear that the most advanced form of understanding is achieved when the researchers place themselves within the context of being studied. This is the only way that researchers can understand the viewpoints and the behaviour that characterise social actors (Flyvbjerg, 2006). Thereby this thesis is able to understand the complexity within destination development in the Faroe Islands.

One implication of the chosen method is the selection of the interviewees, as they were not chosen as a random sample, but they were selected due to their ability to provide useful information about the subject and the validity of their inputs.

3.0 Theoretical Literature Review

3.1 Theoretical Introduction

The theory section of this thesis will cover a diverse range of concepts and issues related to tourism development. This will be done in order to provide a conceptual basis for interpreting the empirical data collection, which has been outlined in the methodological section.

The existing academic literature about tourism development in the Faroe Islands is very limited, and generally academic literature about the Faroe Islands is difficult to find. Thus, there seems to be an empirical gap in the academic literature about the Faroe Islands in general.

This section will introduce some of the existing academic literature regarding tourism development, such as Nordic tourism, and tourism in islands destinations, destination development, and policy planning. All of the above are concepts and issues that are relevant to tourism development in the Faroe Islands, and furthermore these concepts will also provide alternative approaches and understanding in the practice of tourism development. The layout of this thesis section has been identified to best allow the topics to flow and provide a substantial supporting reference point in achieving the outlined goals of this thesis. This structure will also be used in the analysis section in order to establish a consistent and comprehensible structure throughout the thesis.

3.1 Nordic Tourism

The Faroe Islands are included in the group of countries that can label themselves Nordic, as the term Nordic "refers to the countries of northern Europe: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden and the associated territories of Greenland, Faroe Islands and the Åsland islands" (Hall, Müller and Saarinen, 2009, p. 22). Therefore, it is important to look into the characteristics of the Nordic countries in order to understand the setting of the Faroe Islands as a destination. The term is unique, as the does not just refer to the geographical landmass, but it also refers to the political, cultural, historical and economical links and relationships between the various countries and territories (Hall, Müller and Saarinen, 2009). Since, the Second World War, the Nordic region has been marked by peace and substantial cooperation, and the region has some of the most open borders in the world, which further reinforce the region's tourism identity, because "any citizen can travel between the Nordic countries without having passports checked, with an identity card being sufficient. Other citizens can also travel between the Nordic countries' border without having their passport checked, but they still have to carry a passport or other kinds of approved travel identification papers" (Hall, Müller & Saarinen, 2009, p.23).

When talking about Nordic tourism, it is important to distinguish between the Nordic and Scandinavia, which is not the same thing, as "the term Scandinavia was originally applied in the 16th century to the countries that the occupied the Scandinavian peninsula: Norway, Sweden and Denmark" (Hall, Müller & Saarinen, 2009, p. 23), whereas the Nordic covers the Scandinavian countries as well as Finland, Iceland, Greenland, the Faroe Islands and Åland.

Although the Nordic countries are relatively small in terms of population, they are still significant on the international tourism market, as a result of "the high standards of living that the countries share, with the exception of some extremely peripheral regions. However, inbound and domestic tourism is important for their economies, especially in rural and peripheral areas that have undergone significant economic restructuring in recent years" (Hall, Müller & Saarinen, 2009, p. 42). There are also various elements of the Nordic identity for instance culture, art, architecture and food, which has been reinforced through the media as well as via tourism specific promotion and marketing, which is also the case in the Faroe Island, and in addition, "from a global perspective the countries of the Nordic region are an important inbound and outbound market in their own right with several significant international tourism businesses including SAS Airlines and Finnair. Furthermore, the Nordic Region has also contributed to [important] innovation in tourism business, education and research" (Hall, Müller & Saarinen, 2009, p. 23). This suggest that the Nordic region is an important player in terms of international tourism businesses, which is also something that has strengthening the region altogether.

The Nordic countries share political, cultural, historical and economical links between them, and one of the most common images of the regions in the world is that of Vikings. The sagas of the Vikings is a result of the 19th and 20th century literature, but the impact of the saga has been profound, as "it was published in 16 English language versions during the 19th century, perhaps just as importantly many of the editions were published with accompanying pictures of Norsemen in honed helmets thereby creating a image of the Viking and of northern lands and values" (Hall, Müller & Saarinen, 2009, p. 57). This image has also been constructed in modern terms, for instance in connection to film, television and other kinds of media (Hall, Müller & Saarinen, 2009) The sagas about the Vikings represent some of the issues associated with tourism branding and image in the Nordic countries, and this is also the case in the Faroe Islands, as it is instantly recognisable, and it has become a possibly valuable form of commodified heritage (Hall, Müller &

Saarinen, 2009). In the case of the Nordic countries there are multiple cases of branding national, regional or local brands while using nature-based products, and it has become a colloquial trademark for the Nordic countries. There are, however, also challenges by having many similarities between the different icons and themes across the national borders within the Nordic region, and "from a demand perspective, the lack of differentiation and brand proliferation can create feeling of confusion in the international marketplace in particular where the geographical attributes of many Nordic regional brands will not be so well known" (Hall, Müller & Saarinen, 2009, p. 58). There are many elements to consider when promoting a specific Nordic destination in order to differentiate it from the other Nordic countries. It is, however, also important to recognise the different characteristics between the Nordic countries, and for instance just in terms of geographical features they are very different; as some of them are connected to Europe, while others are islands. It is also important to bear in mind that the Faroe Islands have for a long time been standing in the shade of other more prominent Nordic Island destination, such as for instance Iceland. The significance of being an island destination as the Faroe Islands will be elaborated in the next section.

3.3 Tourism in Islands Destinations and Microstates

> *"Islands are, and have always been, fascinating places. Associated with*
> *notions of remoteness, separateness, difference and the exotic; they are the*
> *stuff of romance and adventure, of fantasy and escape, of 'otherness'"*
> *(Sharpley, 2012, p. 167).*

As stated by Richard Sharpley, islands have always been considered fascinating places, and it has actually been suggested that islands "have collectively become the world's second most visited category of destination after historic cities (Marín, 2000)" (ibid.). As recognised by many observers, the tourism industry has also become a significant player in the economy of several islands (Sharpley, 2012). Nevertheless, the academic literature that pays attention to tourism in islands varies, as some academics focus on either a general perspective on tourism in islands (for example, Conlin and Baum 1995, or Briguglio et al. 1996), or on a particular types of islands, for instance the tropical or cold-water islands (for example, Gössling 2003, or Baldacchino 2006), or on special themes such as sustainable tourism (for example, Carlsen and Butler, 2011). In relations to these different areas of focus within the academic literature, Sharpley (2012) argues that

> "the considerable academic attention paid to tourism in islands suggests that
> not only are islands, as tourism destinations, deserving of such attention in

their own right but also, and perhaps more importantly, that broad
implications, lessons, policies and processes collectively relevant to islands
in particular (and, implicitly, of less relevance to other categories of
destination) will emerge or be identified. But is this, in fact, the case? Are
islands distinctive as tourists destinations?" (p.168).

It is important to establish why islands are important to study, and Baldacchino (2006) argues that
the academic studies of islands is crucial, as he believes that as islands are closed, manageable
systems that represent different contexts, where concepts, hypotheses and problems can be tested.

It is also essential to identify the meaning of an island in order to understand the literature about
islands, and as suggested by Sharpley (2012), "typically, an island is defined simply as a land mass,
smaller than a continent, entirely surrounded by water. According to this definition, therefore,
island tourism may logically be thought of as tourism that occurs on any land mass considered to be
an island" (p. 169). There are however some challenges to this definition, as it suggests that all
islands falls under one category, without taking into account the size of the island. For instance, the
United Kingdom, Australia, Sri Lanka, New Zealand are all islands of a relatively large land mass,
and it can be proven quite difficult to compare these countries with smaller island destinations such
as the Faroe Islands, Bali, Malta etc. The academic literature on islands tourism focus mostly on the
smaller island states, which suggest that in the context of tourism studies islands are restricted to
smaller land masses surrounded by water. It is also important to make a clear distinction between
types of islands, as some islands are only located a few km off a larger landmass (coastal islands),
while others are separated by larger expanses of water from the nearest continental land masses
(oceanic islands), and the Faroe Islands definitely fall under the latter category. In this regard, it is
crucial to consider the remoteness of an island, as it can affect the country's insularity (Fernandes &
Pinho, 2017).

Some of the world's smaller islands are commonly "associated with a condition of dependency or
vulnerability" (Sharpley, 2012, p.170), which may be correct as a majority of the world's top
twenty most tourism dependent destinations are all islands. However, some islands with small
populations are amongst the richest countries in the world, which is the opposite of what Sharpley
refers to, but Sharpley (2012) also argues that "as relatively small, defined places, cultures and
societies, islands are not only fascinating in their own right but also have long been considered ideal
locations for social scientific research" (p.171). Categorically, the Faroe Islands fall under this

characteristics, as the country is small and surrounded by water, and also an ideal location to do tourism research.

Another word that can be applicable for small islands is microstate, according to Paul F. Wilkinson (1989), "the term microstate has been used to describe a variety of types of political units … it usually refers to independent nations with populations under one million" (pp.153-154). As this term also can include associated states and territories, its usage thereby also include various other forms of government, but as they are not independent they are not "completely autonomous in decision making [but they are at least] potentially involved to some greater or lesser degree in determining policy" (Wilkinson, 1989, p. 154), which is also the case on the Faroe Islands, where Denmark still is powerful in terms of determining policy matters for instance in terms of foreign policy.

3.4 Destination Development

When looking at a specific destination like the Faroe Islands in terms of development, there is a multileveled framework to consider according to Haugland et al. (2011). They focus on three dimensions of tourism development that are important to consider, and these are: "destination capabilities, coordination at the destination level and inter-destination bridge ties" (Haugland et al., 2011, p. 268). These three areas are closely connected to each other, so they have an indirectly impact on destination development. Generally, a tourist destination can be studied as several co-producing actors that are accountable for a combination of different services, and which are all part of a complex network, and in this case the Faroe Islands is regarded as a closed unity. According to Haugland et al. (2011), it is important to look at the destination as a complex network, because there are many challenges involved in the development of different strategies, simply because there are different actors to consider within the destination. These challenges are also present in the Faroe Islands, because even though it is a small country, there are still many different actors to consider, and these challenges will be further discussed in the analysis section.

In terms of destination capabilities, Haugland et al. (2011) argue that all the actors within the destination must share their capabilities and collaborate with each other in order to move the resources from one actor to the entire destination and then as a result be beneficial for all actors. However, this can be a significant challenge, as the competencies and resources within a destination usually are allocated amongst several actors. Haugland et al. (2011) argues that especially two resources are important to share within the destination, as it is extremely beneficial for the entire

destination, which is in relation "to how they communicate about their products and services to the market and in relation to the production of products and services" (p. 273). Furthermore, it can be profitable for all the actors within the destination if they work together to create a "consistent cognitive image based on shared attributes" (Haugland et al., 2011, p. 273), instead of primarily focusing on their individual image, which is exactly what the Faroe Islands do, as the different travel companies in the Faroese tourism sector first promote the Faroe Islands as a destination, and then afterwards promote their own company (Appendix 4). One of the first steps in terms of developing a destination brand is that the destination image should reflect, "the geographic area as well as the actors located in the area. This image should [then] function as an umbrella linking firms and other actors to a common image" (Haugland et al., 2011, p. 274).

According to Haugland et al. (2011) coordination at the destination level is also important in terms of destination development. Usually, it is challenging to launch valuable coordination between small companies within a destination, as they often are in shortage of the required resources and time to such activities (Haugland et al., 2011). Furthermore, it can be difficult for smaller companies to see the benefits of valuable coordination, and thereby they can also be reluctant to invest in it. Haugland et al., (2011) suggestion is to look at the service and retail sectors for inspiration, because they have reacted to related challenges, and they have implemented "vertical and horizontal integration, linking companies closer to each other and thereby enabling closer coordination" (p. 275). Closer coordination within the destination can for instance be done through governance structures, contracts, and common ownership (Haugland et al., 2011). Common ownership is very present in the Faroese tourism sector, which will be elaborated in the analysis section. Haugland et al. (2011) also refer to a third dimension that is important in terms of destination development, which is inter-destination bridge ties. According to Haugland et al., (2011), "for both the destination as a unit and the individual firms, it is also important to be connected to the wider region and other destination as such connection be valuable sources for exchange of information and knowledge" (p. 278). These ties can be between actors, which are operating at different destinations or between common external actors, for instance consulting companies, marketing firms, etc. (Haugland et al., 2011). One of the key goals of such inter-destination bridge ties is that "less developed and less efficient destinations can acquire information and knowledge form the more professionalized and efficient destinations" (Haugland et al., 2011, p. 278). In order to identify any gaps between less developed destination and professional destination

it can be applicable to apply benchmarking techniques, as explained by Haugland et al., (2011). The idea with benchmarking is that "by comparing destinations along a set of dimensions, it is possible to identify performance gaps between destinations and develop strategies and actions to improve performance. Benchmarking can in this way be a useful method to identify examples of good practice" (Haugland et al., 2011, p. 278). Inter-destination bridge ties can help to promote imitation and innovation at the tourist destination, due to the sharing of experiences as well as gaining new knowledge. This can be a tremendous help in terms of the strategic development of a tourist destination like the Faroe Islands, and this specific framework will be discussed further in the analysis section.

3.5 Policy Planning in an island setting

Policy planning is critical in terms of successful tourism development of a destination, and according to Bailey (1998), small islands have not been the focus in tourism research, because

> "when students in British and continental European schools study Europe
> they usually concentrate on the continent's heartland… Rarely do they have
> the chance to consider the situations of those other Europeans who live
> along the continent's Atlantic margins in island and island groups such as
> Faroe, Shetland, Orkney, the Hebrides, Madeira, the Azores and the
> Canaries" (p.309).

Opposing this statement from Bailey (1998), Fernandes and Pinho (2017), believes that the recent academic literature has been propelled, "by an increasing awareness of the need to start thinking about what planning in small islands should be in order to accommodate the growing pressures resulting from fast changing social, economic, and environmental conditions" (p.1). Moreover, it is difficult by small islands regarding development to find a balance between economic, environmental and social requirements, because of their special status and because they have limited development options available. Furthermore, as argued by Fernandes and Pinho (2017), "even where environmental and economically sustainable options of development can be effectively pursued, they might, nonetheless, conflict with the cultural and social aspirations of islands people" (p.2). For instance sustainable development policies that aim at regulating the usage of natural resources can exclude low-income groups on an island. This is problematic as they can be very dependable on these resources. Therefore it is important to gain insights in terms of the patterns and challenges of spatial development in small islands, as small islands can have special cases of development, and as a result it is important to gain a broad perspective of development regarding

policy planning on islands. Fernandes and Pinho (2017) refer to *islandness* as "an intervening variable that does not determine, but contours and conditions … events [taking place on small islands] in distinct, and distinctly relevant, ways" (p.2). They believe that the nature of such events may be social, political, geographical, economic, cultural or biophysical (Fernandes & Pinho, 2017). In relation to this, openness may describe the island condition better than closure, despite the remoteness of the island, as the sea "historically has served as a prime route of communication to the outside world – a fact that can be confirmed by the existence of a very dense network of maritime transport routes by the beginning of the 20th century (Fernandes & Pinho, 2017).

Regarding policy planning in a country like the Faroe Islands it is important to understand the complex nature of the inter-relationship between the major island subsystems, such as the environment, social and economic, as it influence the mechanisms that are important regarding successful policy planning. Moreover, it is also important to bear in mind the role of i.e. Denmark in a setting like Faroe Islands, as "the role of the state is an important element of tourism management, planning and development, particularly in the Nordic countries where there is a strong tradition of state involvement in regional economic and social development and in welfare provision" (Hall, Müller & Saarinen, 2009, p. 72). In relation to the role of the state, it is crucial to consider different jurisdictions, for instance national or municipal governments, who have different powers and goals regarding tourism (Hall, Müller & Saarinen, 2009). Therefore there are a number of common themes that can be mentioned regarding the public sector's involvement and roles in tourism, which are coordination, legislation and regulation, planning, stimulation and entrepreneur. They are all of equal importance, and they are also important in the Faroese tourism setting, and therefore they will be discussed further in the analysis sector.

There are some development and policy challenges in islands, which are related to the political, environmental, social and geographical setting of the island. For instance, one of the most serious planning challenges facing small islands is "the pervasive effects of human activities on the islands' critical ecological functions" (Fernandes & Pinho, 2017, p. 11). This is also the case in the Faroe Islands, where there are limited usable areas and also a highly vulnerable natural system. In small islands the ecosystem's stability is generally fragile and in combination with a resource-intensive economy, it has proven to be extremely challenging to protect the natural resources of these islands (Fernandes & Pinho, 2017). Another overdevelopment has also raised concern, which is the

abandonment of traditional productive uses, especially those that are "related to agriculture, forestry and fisheries, especially in smaller and peripheral islands facing the problem of depopulation due to outmigration" (Fernandes & Pinho, 2017, p. 11). In the Faroe Islands there are still relatively many people that work in the country's most important export good, which is fishery, but the Faroe Islands still have challenges regarding outmigration, as especially women are moving away in order to study at university. However, as noted by Jóhan Pauli Helgason, the outmigration of women has recently stagnated, and he believes that tourism jobs might be one of the reasons behind this development (Appendix 2).

Another challenge regarding policy planning in islands are also the peaks in levels of demand for particular resources, for instance collective goods and services during specific periods of the year (Fernandes & Pinho, 2017). This is also the case in the Faroe Islands, which is a summer destination, and for instance all the hotels in the country are always fully booked during the summer months. This along with other demands for particular resources will be elaborated in the analysis section.

3.7 Theoretic Sub-Conclusion

This theory section has introduced a diverse range of concepts and issues related to tourism development in the Faroe Islands. It has introduced the academic literature regarding tourism development, and introduced tourism development in the Nordic region, as well as the characteristics of islands destinations, as well as policy planning. There are many approaches to understand these specific concepts, for instance how crucial it is for the Faroe Islands to differentiate itself from the other Nordic countries in order to be a strong, individual player in the international tourism market. As an island destination the Faroe Islands have specific challenges in terms of development and policy planning, as there are many issues to consider, there are many stakeholders to take into account, and even a small population can disagree about the future of the destination. Other challenges include lack of resources as well as emigration, which is especially sensitive in an island destination like the Faroe Islands.

4.0 Introduction of the Faroe Islands

Before embarking on the literature review and analysis in this thesis, this section will shortly introduce the Faroe Islands, in order to get a better understanding and important insights of the small Nordic country in the middle of the North Atlantic Ocean. This section will introduce different characteristics of the Faroe Islands that are essential to be familiar with in order to look at destination development.

The Faroe Islands are an archipelago of 18 mountainous and volcanic islands located halfway between its nearest neighbours Iceland and Scotland in the North Atlantic Ocean. The islands are located in the middle of where the warm waters of the Gulf Stream meet the cold waters of the Arctic, which means that the average temperature no matter the season is between 3°-11° C Usually, this means "mild winters, cool summers; usually overcast; foggy, [and] windy" (www.cia.gov). The climate is classified as "Maritime Subarctic" (www.faroeislands.fo), and as the islands "lie in the path of depressions moving northeast … this means that strong winds and heavy rain are possible at all times of the year" (ibid.).

According to the website Visit Faroe Islands, "the islands were first settled in year 300 AD, although no one knows by whom. The first known settlers, according to stories passed down through generation, were Irish monks in the sixth century" (ibid.) However, according to Tania Lousdal Jensen, "the earliest traces on human life on the Faroe Islands date back to the Viking era" (ScienceNordic, 2013). The name of the country first appeared in 1225 as Faereyjar, and it means sheep islands, and this likely led to establishment of the national symbol of the Faroe Islands, which is a ram. The Faroe Islands have been connected politically to Denmark since the 14th century, but since 1948 the Faroe Islands have been a self-governing country under the external sovereignty of the Kingdom of Denmark, which means the islands have "exclusive competence to legislate and govern independently within a wide range of areas, such as trade, taxation, social security and education, [while] "Denmark is responsible for justice, defence and foreign affairs" (www.cia.gov). The Faroe Islands is not a member of the European Union, even though Denmark is.

The Faroe Island is one of the smallest countries within Europe, as "the Faroese archipelago is [only] 113 km long and 75 km wide. [The] total coastline [is] 1,100 km … No point in the Faroe Islands is further [away] than 5 km from the sea" (www.visitfaroeislands.com). Narrow sounds and

fjords separate the islands, and all of 18 islands are inhabited by people except for one, Lítla Dímun, who is also the smallest (ibid.). Furthermore, the islands cover 1,399 km², which is half the size of Luxembourg. According to the official website for the Faroe Islands, "the Faroe Islands have a population of 50,000 people. Out of the existing 30 municipalities, the most populous is the capital, Torshavn, with approximately 20,000 inhabitants. The second largest municipality is Klaksvik with almost 5,000 inhabitants, and Runavik takes third place with 3,800" (www.faroeisland.fo).

The Faroe Islands are connected and linked because of excellent infrastructure, which "connect six of the islands, with 90% of the population, by excellent roads, bridges and subsea tunnels" (www.faroeislands.fo). The islands that are not connected by bridges, land bridges, or underwater tunnels are "connected by seven different ferry links, which are run by the nationally owned transport company SSL. Furthermore, the Faroese airline company, "Atlantic Airways, runs helicopter trips from the mainland to some of the remote areas in the Faroe Islands" (ibid.). As the Faroe Islands is located isolated from other countries, it is necessary to travel long distances in order to get to the Faroe Islands, and "combined with the ever changing and, at times, harsh weather conditions, this has made the Faroes historically difficult to access from the outside. But with the arrival of airplane and modern ferries, it is easy and relatively quick to travel to the Faroe Islands today" (ibid.). Historically, the most accessible way to travel to the Faroe Islands has been by the seaway. Today, there is only one ferry that transfers passengers to and from the Faroe Islands, "this is the ferry Norröna, which is operated by the Faroese Smyril Line. Norröna sails to Denmark and to Iceland, transferring both passengers and cargo" (ibid.).

There is only one airport, Vágar Airport, in the Faroe Islands, and it is located on the island of Vágoy. The airport was build by the British Army in 1942 as a military base during the Second World War, where the Faroe Islands were under British occupation, but "after the war, there was almost no airport traffic for more than an decade. But, in the 1960s the Faroese population began demanding faster and more frequent links to the rest of the world" (ibid.). As a result, the airport was converted from a military base into a passenger airport, and the first air routes began flying in 1963 (www.faroeislands.fo). Until 1987, the airport was serviced by an Icelandic airline, but in 1987 the first Faroese airline company, Atlantic Airways, was established. Since the runway was extended in 2011, which has made it possible for larger aircrafts to land in the Faroe Islands, the

monopoly of Atlantic Airways has disappeared, as Scandinavian Airlines (SAS) also have flights to and from the Faroe Islands nowadays. There are regular routes to Denmark, both Copenhagen and Billund, as well as weekly routes to Reykjavík, and during the high seasons there are also flights to Aalborg (Denmark), London (UK) and Bergen (Norway).

The main industry and export on the Faroe Islands is fishing, as the sector account for "about 90% of exports and about 20% of GDP" (ibid), [and] in 2015, "unemployment was registered at 2,3%" (Hagstova Føroya, 2015, p. 17), which is one of the lowest within the European borders. Other important sectors apart from fishing are aquaculture, shipping and offshore services, tourism and prospects for petroleum in the Faroese area (ibid.). Regarding the Faroese economy, it has experienced a period of significant growth since 2011, due to increase in fish prices, salmon farming and catches in the pelagic fisheries. (ibid.)

Traditionally, the food culture in the Faroe Islands goes back to when the Vikings arrived and settled on the islands, "at that time, food resources were scarce, consisting only of birds in the air, small vegetation in the valleys, and fish and whales in the fjords" (www.faroeislands.fo). The Vikings brought sheep, cattle, and other household animals to the islands, but "the art of survival was a challenge to the first many generations of Faroese people" (ibid.). Traditionally, the way the Faroese manage to store food over long periods of time have resulted in some unique flavours in the Faroese kitchen, and "one of the distinct flavours that the Faroese have named *ræst*, comes from drying either meat or fish outdoors, where an aging and fermenting process will take place" (ibid.), and the taste of the drying meat all depends on the weather. The taste is the cornerstone in the Faroese kitchen, as it is a "reflection of the age-old art of survival, but it is also, for the young chef in the Faroese, the very embodiment of a contemporary construction, namely, *umami* – the fifth and little-known basic taste" (ibid.). Until very recently, there has been little to no innovation in the Faroese culinary scene, as the average person will prepare meals in practically the exact same way as their ancestors did centuries ago. However, new chefs have started to reinvent the old traditional Faroese dishes in a way so it has attracted attention abroad. Just in February 2017 the Faroe Islands received its first Michelin Star, as the local Torshavn restaurant Koks got the honour.

According to the national website Faroeisland.fo, the tourism industry plays an important part in the Faroese economy today, and in 2012, the government decided to reorganise the tourist board,

VisitFaroeIslands, and to increase its funding (www.faroeislands.fo). Afterwards, VisitFaroeIslands announced their new goals, which is "doubling the number of overnight stays in the Faroe Islands by 2020, as well as doubling revenues during the same period" (ibid.). Since the establishment of the tourist board, the growth has been consistent, and from "the first half of 2014 to the same time in 2015 alone, overnight stays increased by 16%" (ibid.). One reason for this increase was the total solar eclipse in March 2015 that was only fully visible in the Faroe Islands and on Svalbard in Norway.

Kent Lindquist Christensen, the owner of Make Travel, points out that, "tourism in the Faroe Islands have increased within the last 25 years with a small increase every year, but tourism has increased immensely within the last 3-4 years" (Appendix 3, l. 22-33). Danes are still by far the largest group of tourists that arrive in the Faroe Islands, because in 2012 they accounted for more than 80% of all nationalities arriving in the Faroe Island by plane, but other Nordic nationalities are also well represented (VisitFaroeIslands, 2013). From 2010 to 2012, there was a significant increase (12%) in people traveling to the Faroe Islands by plane, for instance in 2010 there was a total of 99.749 people arriving, while in 2012 there was a total of 112.710 people arriving (VisitFaroeIslands, 2013, p. 7). One of the biggest increases in the number of passengers arriving in the Faroe Islands have been people with another nationality than Danish, Norwegian, Icelandic, Scottish or United Kingdom, in 2010 there was only 2,914 people who arrived in the Faroe Islands, while there was 5,316 people who arrived in 2012, which shows a 147% increase (VisitFaroeIslands, 2013, p. 7).

5.0 Analysis

5.1 Analysis Introduction

This analysis section will cover section with a series of sub-sections in each, such as current tourism trends, product innovation and initiatives, and policymaking. These sections will combine the theoretical underpinnings acknowledged in the previous section with the empirical data collected in the Faroe Islands.

The first section will investigate and analyse the current tourism setting in the Faroe Islands, and look into the current tourism trends, which can help explain why the Faroe Islands have experienced an increase throughout the recent years in tourist arrivals. This will provide valuable insights in terms of establishing what challenges and possibilities the tourism industry in the Faroe Islands has.

The second section looks into innovation initiatives in the Faroe Islands, in order to investigate what initiatives that have been successful in relation to attracting more tourists to the Faroe Islands. This will help to establish which initiatives that could help expand the season in the Faroe Islands.

The third section will look into policymaking and common ownership in the Faroe Islands, as this will help to determine if it is possible to expand the season, and what challenges and possibilities that are in this context.

The design of this analysis section is closely associated with that of the whole thesis, where each section is structured to flow and contribute to the previous. Each of the section will aim to gradually contribute to the previous section in order to create a process that will most efficiently contribute to the theoretical deliberations, and unfold the case of the Faroe Islands and various other concepts.

5.2 Current Tourism Trends

This section will make a short introduction regarding the current trends within the tourism industry that is relevant in the Faroese context, e.g. safety and security, remoteness etc. The European continent is one of the world's largest tourism regions, and the number of arrivals is growing year by year (VisitDenmark, 2015). The Nordic regions have also experienced a growth in tourism, and as a result tourism has emerged as a potential new driver of the Nordic economies, which is "thanks to extensive growth in travel to Sweden, [Denmark] and especially to Iceland by a wide range of international tourists in the period 2008-2014" (State of the Nordic Region, 2016) Thereby there is great potential in terms of expanding this phenomenon to the whole Nordic region. Generally, the

Nordic region is famous for its unspoiled nature, hip and cosy cities, and wintery landscape during the winter months, which attract tourists. Moreover there are certain images and descriptions that can be related to the Nordic destination which e.g. are quietness, remoteness, safety, security and authenticity. Nowadays, there are more attention on safety and security regarding tourism destinations, and according to the World Economic Forum's Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report 2017 that was published on 5th of April, there are three Nordic countries on their list: *the safest countries to visit in 2017*, which are Norway, Iceland and Finland. The terms safety and security and their significance in the Faroese context will be elaborated in the following section.

5.2.1 The Faroe Islands: A safe destination?

Safety and security were matters that were mentioned numerous times throughout my stay in the Faroe Islands, and the perception of being a safe destination is extremely important nowadays, as "tourism in major cities across Europe has been hit by the recent terror attacks across the continent, [while] the inbound industry in Scandinavia is doing exceptionally well" (TTG Nordic, 2016). According to Jóhan Pauli Helgason, who is adviser at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade in Torshavn, the Nordic countries have a reputation of being relatively safe destinations, and he emphasised how people have greater focus when it comes to their sense of security, as "Europe is perceived as a more and more unsafe continent to travel to because of terror etc." (Appendix 2, l.75). This is why he thinks that people travel to the Faroe Islands, because it is perceived as a safe and secure destination. According to Diana Chen, who has her own travel blog, "The Faroe Islands are extremely safe, the people are incredibly hospitable, and overall it is a very relaxing and comfortable place to stay, without the hustle and bustle or stress of the big city. Even the largest city, Torshavn, felt slow-moving and relaxing" (www.mvmtblog.com, 2016). As said by Kent Lindquist Christensen, "the Faroe Islands are a safe destination. We don't have terrorism. We don't have any crime" (Appendix 3, l.67). Furthermore, Michael B, who has his own travel blog, points out with a little fun, but true fact that

> "the Faroe Islands are probably ranked among the safest countries
> in the world. It is highly unlikely that you will encounter any
> problem, like theft, let alone robbery. The greatest risks probably
> are the badly lit one-way tunnels, both in case you are driving and
> cycling. Avoid the last option if you can though"
> (www.travellerspoint.com).

There are great possibilities in terms of branding the Faroe Islands as a more safe and secure destination compared to other European countries, especially given the current unsecure situation in continental Europe. VisitFaroeIslands has already used safe and security as something significant in their branding of the Faroe Islands, and on their website they write the following: "the Faroe Islands have nearly no crime, making it one of the safest places on earth to travel to. You can rest assured that you are safe at all times, both day and night" (www.visitfaroeislands.dk).

When being in the Faroe Islands, it is clear that people feel safe and secure, as children are running around and playing in the streets without supervision, people are using the city's public transportation, and people are going out after dark. Like a local citizen told me, when I asked him if he felt safe in Torshavn, "Yes, I feel completely safe, we have almost no crime here, and it just is very relaxing here, so I am not worried at all about my safety". Safety and security are vital components in a tourism destination in terms of providing quality, because "more than any other economic activity, the success or failure of a tourism destination depends on being able to provide a safe and secure environment for visitors" (Kararach & Otieno, 2016, p. 87). When looking at the given destination it is clear that both locals and visitors regard the Faroe Islands as a safe tourist destination, and nothing suggest that it is going to change. However, the safety aspect could be something, which VisitFaroeIslands could promote even more to attract more tourists, especially due to the situation in continental Europe. It could also be used to attract more tourists who are not coming from the other Nordic countries. According to Kent Lindquist Christensen, around 70-75% of the visitors to the Faroe Islands are from Scandinavia (Appendix 3, l. 44-46), which demonstrates that it is popular to travel between the Nordic countries. The Faroe Islands have also become a popular destination outside the local marked, probably because people has explored the region before e.g. Iceland, and thereby open their minds and eyes for other destination in the region. As Kent Lindquist Christensen points out, "when you look at a world map, then it almost certain that you cannot find the Faroe Islands, because we are such a small destination that we are impossible to find" (Appendix 3, l. 63-65). The safety aspect could be used to attract even more of these tourists to the Faroe Islands.

Other current tourism trends besides security and safety are remoteness and quietness, which are also applicable in the Faroese context, and they will be discussed in the following section.

5.2.2 Faroe Islands: A quiet destination far away

In the Faroese context, safety and security are closely linked to the geographical location of the destination, in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean far away from continental Europe. As Dominik Sipinski points out, "with 300 days of rain and more sheep than people, the Faroe Islands make for one of the odder emerging tourists destinations in Europe" (CNN, 2014). Hence, the Faroe Islands have remained remote in many people's imaginations.

The Faroe Islands is still a relatively new tourist destination, and according to Jóhan Pauli Helgason it is not a coincidence that more tourists are arriving in the Faroe Islands, because according to him tourists are generally "seeking more exclusive and untouched destinations that are not tourist-like" (Appendix 2, l. 72-73). Jóhan Pauli Helgason believes that the Faroe Islands are exactly that, because tourists perceive it as a destination that is different and exciting, and also remote. Guri Højgaard agrees, and she points out that it is because the Faroe Islands is a beautiful country with nice and welcoming people and an interesting culture (Appendix 1, l.18-19). She also mentions another important reason for the increasing tourists arrivals in the Faroe Islands, which is that is separates itself from the rest of the Nordic countries, because according to her the Faroe Islands are the "nutshell in the nutshell" (Appendix 1, l.15). She also believes that the Faroe Islands are the most authentic destination within the Nordic countries, and she is not the only one who has this perception, as Friðun Jacobsen share it (Appendix 4, l. 240).

As a destination, the Faroe Islands is highly influenced by its Nordic roots, which is obvious when you visit the Faroese archipelago, because the raw, scarcely populated islands are just how you imagine other countries looked like several centuries back, which alongside the silent, yet dramatic, scenery almost feels untouched by humans and technology. The remoteness and isolations of the Faroe Islands definitely contribute to this feeling, for instance Lucy Fuggle points out "one of the trends in 2016 is that tourists … will be looking for opportunities to explore lesser-known destinations, especially those that are untouched or unique" (www.trekksoft.com, 2015).
A local ferryman that I talked with told me, "this rawness and remoteness you cannot find anywhere else, at least you have to go very far away. Immediately, when people land here in the airport they find themselves out in nowhere, and they like it instantly". Even Stansted Airport in London describes the Faroe Islands, as "the lesser-known destination of choice for those seeking to escape the bustle of the modern world" (www.standstedairport.com), which suggest that when looking at the Faroe Islands as a tourist destination the quietness is fairly noteworthy.

Remoteness and quietness are characteristics that are closely linked to isolation, and when you look at a destination like the Faroe Islands, all of these characteristics are relevant. According to Laura Powell, "isolation is the next big thing in luxury travel … [and] especially for those who have seen and done it all, isolation or being disconnected from the pressures of everyday life can be a real luxury" (Skift, 2017). The Faroe Islands is an isolation destination, and according to Kent Lindquist Christensen people are drawn to it, because most people do not know where it is, not even people from Scandinavia, and therefore they consider the Faroe Islands a remote destination (Appendix 3, l.58) As Jolyon Attwooll points out, "wild, remote, and windswept, the Faroe Islands in the North Atlantic are splendid in their isolation" (The Telegraph, 2011). Furthermore, Jolyon Attwooll notes that the Faroe Islands stand out "for something completely different, a world away from the standard bucket-and-spade break on the beaches in the Mediterranean" (Ibid.) Hence, the remoteness and isolation of the Faroe Islands can be regarded as an advantage, and it is also something that is being used to portray the Faroe Islands,

> "At first sight, the Faroe Islands might give the impression of quite a
> uniform vegetation with no trees – only a tundra-like appearance. A closer
> look however, reveals surprising diversity … The fauna of the Faroe Islands
> reflects the islands' remoteness, as there are few terrestrial species, but
> plenty of seabirds and marine animals" (www.faroeislands.fo).

Hence, the remoteness of the Faroe Islands means that as a destination it can also attract tourists with special interests e.g. bird watching etc., and this will be elaborated later in section 6.2.1. According to Florian Boller et al. (2010) remote areas are unique, because they are a contrast to urban living, and because (2010), "remote areas devoid of roads and tourist transport infrastructure are increasingly appreciated in urbanized countries, because they provide the opportunity to experience tranquillity, solitude, and pristine nature, which are recreational qualities that contrast with the stress of urban life" (p.320). This also indicates that one of the advantages of being an isolated island destination like the Faroe Islands is that it can differentiate itself from other destinations, and remoteness is apparently fascinating to many people, as noted by Kent Lindquist Christensen (Appendix 3). Furthermore, Lorraine Boissoneault points out, "marked by dramatic landscapes where earth meets sea, the Faroe Islands is a destination that doesn't appear on many maps … Even though they've been inhabited for hundreds of years, the islands are one of the best-kept secrets of the Northern Hemisphere" (www.weather.com, 2013).

Islands destinations have always been fascinating places, because they have been associated with different characteristics, such as remoteness, separateness and differentness, which these different perspectives above clearly also demonstrate. Clearly, the Faroe Islands still have a uniqueness and remoteness that are distinguished, and these are qualities that people are currently seeking, when they are looking for a destination to visit. (Appendix 4). It is clearly that the Faroe Islands are a popular destination, as the hotels are fully booked throughout the summer season (Appendix 2). Therefore people need to book well in advance, if they want to come to the Faroe Islands during the summer months, or otherwise as desired by Friðun Jacobsen, they find another time of the year to visit (Appendix 4).

According to Ilan Kelman (2007), there are several advantages for the island destination, for instance, "tight kinship networks, unique heritage and a strong sense of identity, produce closely-knit communities with sustainable livelihoods" (p. 69). Quietness and remoteness also fall under this category. In terms of tourism, some islands like Mallorca, Bali and Galapagos (Cadwalladr, 2012) have experienced that the tourism growth has damaged the islands' fragile ecology and social systems. Examples like these could raise doubts about whether it is possible to have sustainable island tourism? Moreover, what surprised my during my research about tourism development in the Faroe Islands was how little sustainability was mentioned among the local stakeholders. I anticipated that there would be great focus on sustainable initiatives, because of how small the country is, but only the focus on protection of the natural environment seem to significant to the local stakeholders. Although, some of the stakeholders shortly mentioned sustainability, it was never a major topic in any conversation, and I wonder why. Maybe sustainable tourism is not an option in a small island destination as the Faroe Islands? Sustainability principals are supposed to ensure a bottom-up distribution of benefits (d'Hauteserre, 2016), which can explain why sustainability is not a major topic on the agenda in the Faroe Islands, as tourism initiatives are mostly coming from the top (Appendix 4, l. 180). Regarding protection of the fragile ecology and social system in the Faroe Islands, Jerome McElroy and Rachel Dodds (2007) note that the Faroe Islands is protected by its short season and isolations, because "in several isolated cold-water islands like the Shetlands, the Falklands, Antarctica and Greenland, tourism is controlled by a short holiday season, expensive access, and by a focus on extreme adventure and exploration which are not universally demanded leisure activities" (p.70). This is somewhat true in the Faroe Islands;

however there are challenges connected to this belief, because some want to expand the short season (Appendix 2, l. 58) while others question if this is the right way to go. Nevertheless, the short season cannot be used as the main reason for the protection of the Faroese eco system. Instead, this can be regarded as one of the future challenges for the Faroe Islands, because if as many tourists arrive outside the summer months as in the summer months it will have a major impact on the local infrastructure and ecosystem. The impacts and expansion of the season will be further discussed in section 6.2.

While tourists are currently seeking the quietness and isolation in the Faroe Islands, this can also be regarded as one of the future challenges. Friðun Jacobsen, who refers to Iceland as a scare story, does not want the same Icelandic conditions in the Faroe Islands, because "what if we have the same conditions here? We are selling the nature, and the fact that you almost feel alone in the world up here, but we cannot use it as our main selling point, if we are overrun by tourists" (Appendix 4, l.140-142). Furthermore, she also points to the natural limitations, because "we only have two airline companies and one ferry company, who travel to and from the Faroe Islands, which naturally limits how many tourists that are arriving" (Appendix 4, l. 151-152). However, she is also worried about the future, because the airport has announced that more airlines are interested in flying to and from the Faroe Islands. Even though there are also limitations in terms of hotel capacity. She told me that many hotels are ready to expand, and if this happens she is not sure what will happen in the future if the number of tourists will increase (Appendix 4). Friðun Jacobsen believes that it is important to find a balance, as "there are tensions about it, and therefore it is important that we create a framework, and it is crucial that we remain focused on this task" (Appendix 4, l. 46-48). Guri Højgaard is not as worried for the future as Friðun Jacobsen, because she believes that the capacity of the Faroe Islands is enough protection right now, she argues that "we are not Iceland. We do not have 40% growth every year or anything like it. We are also much smaller than Iceland, so we can not accommodate as many people" (Appendix 1, l.89-91). Therefore Guri Højgaard does not believe that the quietness and remoteness in the Faroe Islands is going to be challenged in the future. Jóhan Pauli Helgason is as Friðun Jacobsen also more worried about the future, because according to him, "there are concerns regarding the nature, and that we are destroying the remoteness and the quietness" (Appendix 2, l. 148-149). When looking at the Faroe Islands, it is clear that there are several viewpoints about whether or not the quietness of the country is

threatened or not, and it is difficult to determine where this discussion will end. Especially as there are so many different uncertain components to consider.

5.2.3 The Faroe Islands: An Authentic Tourist Destination?

Another current tourism trend, along with safety and security as well as quietness and remoteness, is authenticity. On VisitFaroeIslands website the use this straightforward phrase to promote the Faroe Islands: "unspoiled, unexplored, unbelievable" (www.visitfaroeislands.com). According to Guri Højgaard it is the tourists who have decided these three words, because they think they are the three words that describe the Faroe Islands best. She told me, "they are the ones who have defined our brand, it is not us that has defined it" (Appendix 1, l. 136). Jóhan Pauli Helgason also believes that "it is a trend that people seek exclusive and untouched areas, that have not yet been affected by tourism" (Appendix 2, l. 72-73). According to Dean MacCannell (1973) tourists are in a "search for authenticity of experiences" (p. 589). However, Tung and Ritchie (2011) points out that "posited existential authenticity as tourist experiences are not based on objects, but rather on the personal feelings involved in activities" (pp. 1369-1370). Hence, this demonstrates a shift from looking at authenticity through toured objects and instead looks at authenticity as a function of the self (Tung & Ritchie, 2011). Tung and Ritchie (2010) refer to Cutler and Carmichael (2010), who argued "authenticity is understood as only being involved in the tourist experience if this is what being sought from the experience" (p. 14) (Tung & Ritchie, p. 1370). According to Guri Højgaard, the Faroe Islands "are perceived as a authentic tourism destination. It is our biggest competitive advantage, because it is one of the biggest trends within the tourism industry. People seek destinations that are authentic and undiscovered etc. And the Faroe Islands is a trendy destination" (Appendix 1, l. 3-6). Kent Lundquist Christensen believes that the authenticity in the Faroe Islands should not be taken for granted, because "we are selling the Faroe Islands, as an authentic destination, where you meet locals etc., and if we have mass tourism, we are destroying our own brand" (Appendix 3, l.129-131). He believes that there should be more regulation in the Faroe Islands in order to protect the nature and the authenticity, and he hopes that there soon will be some political regulations (Appendix 3). Jóhan Pauli Helgason also believes that there should be a better framework in order to protect the Faroe Islands in the future, because there are things that one quickly can lose control over, "so we have to make a better framework, and there will be a point where we have to say that now we have reached our ultimate capacity, but no one know that exact number" (Appendix 2, l. 134-136). When looking at the Faroe Islands in terms of authenticity, it is obvious that it can be perceived as both a challenge and as a possibility in terms of destination

development. First and foremost, authenticity has been used as a marketing tool in the Faroe Islands, and thereby it has been an important contributor in terms of putting the Faroe Island on the world map as an authentic destination. However, there are also challenges related to this authentic image, and the discussion about the future in the Faroe Islands is still relatively new. Therefore, there have not been many initiatives yet regarding the role of authenticity in destination development, and it will be interesting to watch if there is going to be new initiatives in this context in the future.

Authenticity is also linked to storytelling, which is also important in the Faroe Islands, especially as it is mostly new tourists that are coming to the Faroe Islands. According to Friðun Jacobsen, "it is not the same tourists that are coming over and over again. We have business people that are coming multiple times, and of cause we also have privates that are coming several time. But generally, it is new tourists that are arriving." (Appendix 4, l. 243-247. It is crucial to bear in mind that "storytelling has emerged as a prominent type of narrative designed to directly analyse consumers' memories of their experiences" (Tung & Ritchie, 2010, p. 1372). It is also important to remember that individuals often fit interpretations of their own experiences into their stories, which makes storytelling a very important factor in terms of creating positive tourism experiences in the Faroe Islands. Moreover, storytelling is especially important in terms of the overall destination's brand, as it is affected by the stories that are told by the tourists. Nowadays it is particularly important for planners and travel companies to consider these stories, because people are travelling multiple times a years, and as a result their decision-making process is much shorter, and perhaps they are also more critical. Therefore it is important to create positive tourism experiences in the Faroe Islands that may lay the foundation for creating great stories by the tourists, which is already something that is evident in the Faroe Islands. As a result, authenticity combined with storytelling is a great way for the Faroe Islands to position itself, and according to Friðun Jacobsen, it is important to tell these stories, "to meet the locals in their own homes, or to participate in a local concert, and to be a part of the Faroese food culture. The focus on going back to our roots, to the authentic, it is clear that the tourists find these matters valuable nowadays" (Appendix 4, l. 238- 241). Kent Lindquist Christensen believes that the authentic reality has transformed in the Faroe Islands as,

> "tourists have some idea about that the Faroe Islands is a completely
> unknown destination, and therefore it is only possible to stay in Torshavn.
> They believe it is the place to stay. We try to convince them to stay other

places, because Torshavn is definitely not the Faroe Islands… The real

Faroe Islands are the smaller villages" (Appendix 3, l. 178-183).

Therefore, there are some conflicting realities regarding authenticity in the Faroe Islands, and several of the people I talked with, raised concerns about authenticity in the summer months, where the hotels are fully booked, and where there is people everywhere. The discussion about product innovation and expansion of the season in relation to authenticity will be discussed in sections 5.3 and 6.2.

5.2.4 The Faroe Island on Social Media

Social media is another current tourism trend that this project will look into, as social media has been a crucial cornerstone in the branding of the Faroe Islands during the last couple of years. The impact of social media nowadays is enormous, as "social media has made a huge impact on essentially every major industry across the world, and the business of travel and hospitality has reaped the rewards perhaps as well as any other commercial venture" (Bennett, 2012). The increasing focus on social media in this context started with the establishment of the National Tourism Council in 2012, as the council was given double funding compared to the previous years, which resulted in greater focus on promotion and branding of the Faroe Islands. The step towards a more proactive use of social media has been central according to many of the people I talked with in the Faroe Islands. Kent Lindquist Christensen praises VisitFaroeIslands for its promotion of the Faroe Islands, "the National Tourism Council is doing a good job. Guri Højgaard has made a very good model for how to promote the Faroe Islands, and she needs to be praised for that" (Appendix 3, l. 219-220). Social media is important in the tourism industry, as

> "travel and tourism depends heavily on the use of word-to-mouth to spread
> opinions and recommendations, and social platforms such as Twitter and
> Facebook allow customers to easily share tips and suggestions, which can
> be enormously valuable when positive. Some 92 percent of consumers said
> that they trusted earned media, which includes recommendations from
> friends and family members, more than any other form of advertising"
> (Bennett, 2012).

VisitFaroeIslands has focused on three pillars in their branding of the Faroe Islands on social media, which are the nature, the culture and the people (Appendix 1). The organisation has experienced great interests on social media, and currently VisitFaroeIslands have more than 133,000 followers on Facebook, and more than 123,000 followers on Instagram. According to Guri Højgaard there are

many younger people, who are interested in the Faroe Islands, and she believes their interest comes from social media, "they are around 25 years old, they are instagrammers, we see a lot of them. They are trendy people, who live in London, and they often work in the media industry … they think it is amazing here and very different" (Appendix 1, l. 59-62). Furthermore, according to Guri Højgaard, there are also an increasing high number of journalists and media people, who want to go to the Faroe Islands in order to get a great story about the country. Last year in 2016, VisitFaroeIslands accepted 262 journalists and media people, including three visit from New York Times and National Geographic, and they had to turn a lot of offers down, too (Appendix 1, l. 8-10). This is a lot of media and journalist visits for such a small destination as the Faroe Islands.

There have been launched many different initiatives in terms of social media and tourism in the Faroe Islands, e.g. regarding VisitFaroeIslands' instagram account. Every week a new person has the responsibility for the account, and that person has to post pictures of the Faroe Islands during that week. Often the person that is responsible for the account that specific week is in the Faroe Islands during that period of time. As a result, the instagram account is filled with pictures from all over the country, and in terms of publicity and branding the account has been quite important, because the exposure of the Faroe Islands among instagrammers has been significant. Generally, social media has an increasing impact on tourists, both before, under and after any given trip, and

> "a recent study showed that more than half (52 percent) of respondents
> changed their travel plans after researching their trip using social media. A
> heady 85 percent of travellers use their smartphones whilst abroad, and 53
> percent of Facebook users said that their friends' holidays photos had
> inspired their vacation choice" (Bennett, Adweek, 2012).

Thus, when looking at the Faroe Islands, it is obvious that social media is an important tool, and it provides great possibilities for further branding of the Faroe Islands in the future. Social media is therefore probably going to have an even greater impact that it has nowadays. According to Juliet Carnoy (2017), there has been a significant rise in social sharing, and social media has expanded and it has facilitated people's ability to share their travel experience with a much wider audience than ever before. She believes that it is not going to be less in the future, as "over 97% of millennials share photos and videos of their travels online, building an influential web of peer-to-peer content that servers to inspire potential guests" (Carnoy, 2017).

Generally, VisitFaroeIslands has done a lot in terms of social media, and according to Guri Højgaard this is just the tip of the iceberg, as VisitFaroeIslands believe that social media is crucial nowadays in order to attract tourists. For instance they also launched the hashtag #govisitthefaroeislands, which according to Guri Højgaard, also has been a popular and effective initiative (Appendix 1). Last year in 2016, VisitFaroeIslands also launched a specific campaign, called Sheep View, that became known worldwide, and the specific campaign will be elaborated further in the next section.

5.2.5 Sub-Conclusion

Regarding current tourism trends such as safety, security, remoteness, isolation, authenticity and social media, the Faroe Islands are a destination, where these terms are very relevant to investigate. The Faroe Islands is considered by both tourists and the local population as a safe and secure destination, and the perception of being a safe destination is very important nowadays, especially as continental Europe has experienced various attacks the last couple of years. Safety is also something that VisitFaroeIslands use in their branding of the Faroe Islands. As a tourist destination, the remoteness of the Faroe Islands is a major contrast to urban living, which some tourists find attracting. One of the advantages of being an isolated destination like the Faroe Islands is that it can differentiate itself from other destinations. However, the quietness of the Faroe Islands can also be viewed as one of the future challenges, because the nature and "almost-alone-feeling" in the Faroe Islands are the major selling points at the moment. If more tourists arrive, then these selling points are no longer valid. Authenticity is also significant in the Faroe Islands, as tourists generally seek authentic experiences, but with an increasing number of tourist arrivals, the authentic experience might be difficult to maintain.

5.3 Innovative Tourism Initiatives in the Faroe Islands

Successful destination development are often linked to innovative tourism initiatives, and this section will take a closer look into such initiatives in the Faroe Islands. Innovation in terms of product development can be significant in a destination like the Faroe Islands, because it is a way for the destination to differentiate itself from other destination. However, as the Faroe Islands are a relatively small destination, it is important not to focus on too many initiatives, as they require more resources. Several of the people I talked with during my trip, highlighted the importance of focusing on quality rather than quantity in terms of tourism initiatives, for instance Guri Højgaard from VisitFaroeIslands (Appendix 1). Jóhan Pauli Helgason also highlights how important it is to involve

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the local community in terms of tourism initiatives (Appendix 2). This section will look at Sheep View, a campaign that has been launched by VisitFaroeIslands, as well as food tourism and hiking tourism.

5.3.1. Sheep View

As mentioned previously, sheep outnumber people in the Faroe Islands, and the sheep are difficult to escape in the Faroe Islands. As Tim Ecott points out "the oldest surviving document in the Faroe Islands is "The Sheep Letter". Written in 1298, it explains the rules about where sheep can be kept and when they should be brought off the fells for winter. It's hard to get away from sheep on these islands" (Financial Times, 2016). In terms of tourism, sheep have never played a significant part until last year, where VisitFaroeIslands launched the campaign Sheep View 360 on April 28th. As Will Coldwell writes "so tired of waiting for Google Street View to come and map the roads, causeways and bridges of the archipelago, a team has set up its own mapping project – Sheep View 360" (The Guardian, 2016).

VisitFaroeIslands fitted five of the island's sheep with a 360-degree camera, with the help of a local shepherd and a specially built harness built by a fellow islander, Durita Dahl Andreassen, who was also the person behind the initiative. She wanted Google to come to the Faroe Islands, because according to her, the Faroe Islands have some of the most beautiful roads in the world (Coldwell, The Guardian, 2016). The idea was to get the sheep to help map the islands, because "as the sheep walk and graze around the island, the pictures are sent back to Andreassen with GPS co-ordinates, which she then uploads to Google Street View" (Coldwell, The Guardian, 2016). According to Durita Dahl Andreassen,

> "I gently placed a 360-degree camera, powered by a solar panel, on the
> back of a sheep that would take photographs as the animal freely grazed
> the open hillsides of the Faroe Islands. Photos are taken every minute,
> before being uploaded to Google. [As] Photos are then transmitted back to
> my phone so that I can upload them to Google Street View myself, finally
> putting the Faroes on the map in a unique way" (Burgees, Wired, 2016).

The people behind the Sheep View project have taken panoramic footage of five locations in the Faroe Islands, and they have also produced 360 videos so people can explore the Faroe Island online (Coldwell, The Guardian, 2016). The project has helped to promote the Faroe Islands to visitors, but "the project is [also] part of a campaign to convince Google to come to the island to

complete the mapping project. Visit Faroe Islands launched a petition and the hashtag #wewantgooglestreetview to promote its case" (ibid.). In August 2016 the aim of the project succeeded, as Google Street View arrived on the Faroe Islands.

Some people were sceptical for this global spotlight to come to such a isolated place like the Faroe Islands, but Durita Dahl Andreassen believe that the country is ready for it, "it's a place that has always been so hidden and far away from everything, but I think that we are ready to invite people to the place" (ibid.) The campaign got a lot of attention from all over the world, and according to Durita Dahl Andreassen it made a difference. When she launched the campaign together with VisitFaroeIslands she also started her own blog, so people from across the world were able to follow her and the different initiatives she launched during the whole process. As noted by Durita Dahl Andreassen, "here in the Faroe Islands we have to do things our way. Knowing that we are so small and Google is so big, we felt this was the thing to do" (ibid.).

The idea of using sheep to map the Faroe Islands on Google Street View is quite brilliant, and it demonstrates that innovation initiatives like this can be very rewarding. It also shows that in terms of innovation, the Faroe Islands, is very capable of using the resources that are available. The Sheep View campaign has also been a hugely successful tourism PR-campaign for the Faroe Islands, as noted by Guri Højgaard, "the campaign gave us 300 million Danish kroner in PR, and it gave us 2 billion Danish kroner in exposure, which means that it was the most watched tourism campaign in the world last year" (Appendix 1, l.109-110). This just demonstrates how successful the campaign has been.

Apart from the valuable branding, the Sheep View project has also been quite successful in terms of gaining recognition across the globe. In November 2016, the campaign won two silver awards at the prestigious Epica Awards held in Amsterdam, and the alternative campaign was up against nearly 400 entries from 70 different countries, and the prize is decided by a jury of 200 journalists working with marketing and communication (www.faroeislands.com). Furthermore, in April 2017, just after I came back from the Faroe Islands, the campaign won the top Travel and Tourism Award at the World Media Awards 2017, which took place in London. The Sheep View campaign has "generated two billion media impressions and an estimated PR value of around $50 million [and] the campaign, in turn, shared the natural beauty of the little-known islands with the world,

garnering support from countless destinations worldwide" (Travel PR, 2017). The campaign was nominated alongside other strong contestants like Airbnb, Destination Canada, London & Partners and Marriott International (Appendix 1, l.107-108). This campaign reveals how capable the Faroe Islands have been in terms of doing its own thing in terms of innovative initiatives, and it has clearly been a great success. The Sheep View campaign has turned out to be a great, alternative tourism campaign and as a tourism innovation product it has clearly won the recognition that it deserves.

5.3.2 The Faroese Cuisine

Food tourism is also a segment that has become increasingly important in the Faroe Islands, and it has contributed to the current success of the Faroe Islands as a tourist destination. Although, the food tourism is still in its early stages in the Faroe Islands, the Faroese cuisine has already attracted a lot of attention worldwide. Especially, as the first Michelin Star has just been giving to the Faroese restaurant Koks in Torshavn, and many people expect a lot from this achievement. Especially as dining out has never been a strong Faroese tradition, but "head chef Poul Andrias Ziska's artistry is chancing that. The announcement that Koks had won a Michelin star immediately resulted in hundreds of bookings – and getting a table in the short summer season is going to be tough" (Ecott, The Telegraph, 2017).

The Faroese food culture has experienced quite a revolution, because 15 years ago there were no proper restaurants in the archipelago, "faroese food was definitely off-limits … You couldn't offer fermented food to anyone but ourselves, it was something you only ate at home. Today, everything has changed regarding that" (Harrod, Financial Times, 2017). The Faroese cuisine is known as being a part of the New Nordic trend, which has only existed for some years, because earlier the Nordic cuisine and local Faroe dishes were not considered good enough for fine dining (Thurfjell, Nordic Way, 2015). This has however changed. When Leif Sørensen, who is a world-renowned chef, returned to the Faroe Islands after years in France and Denmark, he started to serve French-Danish cuisine, because he thought the locals were fed up with their own food and wanted something new (Thurfjell, Nordic Way, 2015). However, foreign tourists started asking him for local dishes, and

> "I realised that it was stupid to serve French food in the Faroe Islands, so I
> developed my style into Nordic. I started a new restaurant, and then
> another, now working as if there was a Faroe cuisine, trying to express the

tradition in a modern way. Today, there's no longer a discussion about

using local products" (Thurfjell, Nordic Way, 2015).

As there were no restaurants in the Faroe Islands just some years back, the local population do not have a history of going out for dinner. However, due to the rapid growth of the food industry in the Faroe Island, the tradition of going out for dinner has also slowly changed. According to Friðun Jacobsen,

"tourism has changed a lot here in Torshavn, because there are more life in

the city now, more restaurants etc. It has also changed our own way of

living, because just a few years back it was not normal for us to go out to

dinner. It has definitely changed our way of behaviour" (Appendix 4, l.

211-214).

The increase in tourists coming to the Faroe Island has impacted the food industry according to Friðun Jacobsen, as more restaurants have opened, because of the increasing demand for dining-out options. Especially, Torshavn has experienced a boom in new restaurants. Tim Ecott believes that the success in the Faroese food industry and the announcement of the Michelin star is "all part of the Faroes' success at attracting tourists to a destination that is generally windy, wet, cloudy and cool" (The Telegraph, 2017).

Michael Booth describes the Faroe Islands as "the new frontier in the new Nordic food movement. A place where a tiny band of determined pioneers, led by one visionary chef, is developing a radical, contemporary cuisine from the most meagre culinary heritage" (The Guardian, 2013). According to Guri Højgaard, "many people think that the Faroese kitchen has some of the most exquisite food in the world, and for instance some believe that the Faroe Islands have the best langoustine" (Appendix 1, l. 16-17). Jóhan Pauli Helgason also believes that the Michelin star will have an impact on food tourism, as "these kinds of tourists will come all year round" (Appendix 2). According to Guri Højgaard is it clear that the Faroese cuisine is one of many reasons why tourists are coming to the Faroe Islands, "New initiatives are constantly emerging, and especially in terms of food. A lot happens in that field, and we see and have many foodies, who want to experience the Faroese cuisine" (Appendix 1, l. 112-114).

The food industry and tourism are closely linked in terms of the destination development of the Faroe Islands, as they influence each other. According to Kent Lindquist Christensen, the tourists are the main reason for the opening of more restaurants in the Faroe Islands,

> "How come that Johannes Jensen can open 15 different restaurants? That is only possible because of the tourists. If he only had the locals as his customers, then he would never had been able to open so many restaurants. The restaurants are here, because the tourists are here. You and I can now go and eat a fine meal on a high gastronomic level, and we wouldn't not have been able to do that without the tourists" (Appendix 3, l. 161-164).

However, Johannes Jensen, who is the owner of 12 different restaurants in the Faroe Islands, and whose restaurants have helped to raise the profile of Faroese cuisine, is both proud and somewhat afraid, "we have such a nice way of living here, we don't have tourists all over the place, and we like it. We don't want to copy the situation of Iceland or elsewhere. Tourism spoils what it seeks – that's what were are afraid of" (Harrod, Financial Times, 2017). Nevertheless, he also points out that he has not opened the restaurants because of the tourists, as opposite to Kent Lindquist,

> "it's a little bit crazy, because there's no market here… But we are not opening just because of money. We have to be sustainable economically but we really want to create things. Entrepreneurs don't search for profit only, they want to do something, like artists and journalists, they want to make a difference" (Harrod, Financial Times, 2017).

These different perceptions highlight that food tourism is still a relatively new matter in the Faroe Islands, and people do not agree on whether or not tourism has influenced the increasing focus on the Faroese cuisine. Nevertheless, the increasing focus on the Faroese cuisine has great possibilities in terms of being another reason why tourists are coming to the Faroe Islands. As Jóhan Pauli Helgason points out, the tourists that are coming because of the Faroese cuisine are tourists that can come all year around. Thereby, the food industry can be helpful in terms of moving the high number of tourists in the summer months, and instead attract tourists to come in the shoulder season. In terms of innovation, the Faroese cuisine has definitely been revolutionary, and the food industry can open up for many possibilities in terms of destination development. There is however also challenges related to the Faroese cuisine, because as Johannes Jensen points out, some people are not interested in too many tourists. All of the people I talked with in the Faroe Islands believe that the Faroese cuisine will be a significant part of why tourists will come to the Faroe Island in the

future. Therefore, it will be interesting to watch in which direction the development of the food industry in the Faroe Islands will go.

5.3.3 Hiking in the Faroe Islands

When looking at tourism initiatives that are especially well suited for a tourism destination like the Faroe Islands, hiking is one of them, as the Faroe Islands offer remote and natural landscapes with a high potential for recreation. According to Guri Højgaard, the Faroe Islands is known as a destination where people can do several things such as hiking, diving, dining, bird watching, knitting, fishing etc. (Appendix 1, l. 40). There has been a general growth in nature-based tourism this could lead to a rising demand for wilderness and remoteness in the future, and "in Europe … larger remote areas have become rare and are located primarily in Scandinavia, Scotland, Corsica, Sardinia, and in [other] mountainous areas" (Boller et al., 2010, p. 320). When talking about nature tourism it is important to define its meaning, and in this context "nature-based tourism is defined as outdoor tourism activities in natural areas" (Wolter, 2014, p. 6), which is a segment of tourism that depends on nature and natural settings. There has been a massive growth in tourists, during the last decades, which focus on nature tourism, and according to Wolter (2014), "in the late 1980s (Weaver and Oppermann, 2000), nature tourism accounted for only 2% of all tourism whereas today, according to Buckley (2009a), it represent more than 20%" (p. 13). There is also an increasing focus on nature-based tourism activities in the Faroe Islands, such as hiking and fishing, and according to Melissa Jones, "my four days on the islands whizzed by in a blur of stunning scenery, changing weather and outdoor adventures" (I-on Magazine, 2017).

The remoteness of the Faroe Islands is certainly a plus, because as a destination it offers unique hiking experiences for tourists. This remoteness and uniqueness have also been used in the branding of the Faroe Islands as a hiking destination. As written on VisitFaroeIslands website, "one of the many special features of the Faroe Islands is that you don't have to go far to experience magnificent and untouched nature. Look around you. Take a few steps. Take a deep breath and listen. It's all right there!" (www.visitfaroeislands.com). Furthermore, as the Faroe Islands is a relatively small destination, it is fairly easy to move around, and it is possible to walk almost everywhere. As Satu Vänskä-Westegarth (2015) writes on her travel blog, "The great thing about hiking in the Faroes is that you can pretty much walk anywhere and everywhere, just pick your spot and head up or down" (www.todestinationunknown.com). According to VisitFaroeIslands one can expect to experience many different things while hiking in the Faroe Islands, "fresh air, wind in your hair, tall mountains,

sunny valleys, fascinating fog, beautiful lakes, grazing sheep and breath-taking views. These are some of the things you will experience while hiking in the Faroese Mountains" (www.visitfaroeisland.com).

In 2015 VisitFaroeIslands published a new hiking guide with 23 hiking routes and important practical information. While I was in the Faroe Island, I was introduced to this guide, which was given to me by VisitFaroeIslands. Thereafter, I started to plan which hiking routes to take during my stay in the Faroe Islands. Initially I chose to do five different hiking routes during my stay, but due to weather conditions I ended up by doing only four. As the brochure was very readable and full of details I anticipated that it would be a piece of cake to follow the instructions, but it turned out to be rather difficult. Every one of the hiking trails had a starting point and most of them also an ending point, or if this was not the case, the starting point was also the ending point. However, only one of the four hiking trails had a sign that signalled that this was the starting point of the trail, and with the rest of them, I had to guess after looking at the map where the starting point would be, because there was no signs at all. I managed to find all the trails despite the complete lack of signs, but it was not an easy task, which made me wonder if this is the case with all the trails.
This suggest that while the idea of hiking routes in the Faroe Islands is great, there are some challenges associated with them. Even though I do not know if the lack of information and signs are present at each of the 23 hiking routes throughout the Faroe Islands, I suspect it can be the case. Especially, as only one out of the four hiking routes that I tried had information and signs. It definitely demonstrates that something is lacking in terms of the establishment of the hiking routes, especially as the hiking guide was published almost two years ago.

During my time in the Faroe Islands I had many positive experiences, especially related to the remoteness of the country. While hiking I did not meet many people on the trail, just a few people, which for many are ideal hiking conditions. As Brian Martucci writes, "I'm a big believer in disconnection from the daily grind occasionally, spending a few days, a week, or even longer away from the pressures and temptations of the modern world. One of the healthiest and most affordable ways to do this is to embark on a long-distance hike" (Health and Fitness, 2015). Most people want to disconnect from the modern world, experience remoteness and have a "true" nature experience, which makes the Faroe Islands an ideal destination. I met a group of boys from the Netherlands, while I was hiking in one of the northern islands, and they told me, "this is the perfect place to hike,

it is just perfect that you almost feel alone here. We have just been hiking in Iceland as well, and there were just way too many people there. We almost walked in lines, and that was not a nice experience". This example from Iceland demonstrates what some people fear can happen in the future in the Faroe Islands. According to Friðun Jacobsen,

> "I have been in Iceland a couple of times myself, and it is clear that there is
> a higher number of tourists than ever before. In front of the landmarks are
> not just one bus but several buses, and people have to stand in lines for
> everything. That scenario is very scary" (Appendix 4, l. 138-141).

Kent Lindquist Christensen agrees with Friðun Jacobsen, "it is no secret that the Faroe Islands always have looked at Iceland as a big brother in terms of tourism, and we have believed that everything they do in Iceland is correct. But what they are doing at the moment is not right" (Appendix 3, l. 134-143). Hence, there seems to be a very strong willpower in the Faroe Islands not to end up like Iceland. Everyone that I talked with, except VisitFaroeIslands, have some worries about the Faroe Islands can end up like Iceland (Appendix 2-4).

In a remote destination like the Faroe Islands, hiking routes are a great offer for tourists, and perhaps the hiking routes can attract more people to come and explore the country by foot. There is however some challenges regarding hiking tourism, because while "the experience of pristine nature and solitude is an important motivation for visitor to [come and visit] wilderness areas … most visitors demand facilities or services, such as mountain huts, which, in turn, are seen as an income opportunity for the regional economy" (Boller et al., 2010, p. 320). This leads to a specific and crucial dilemma regarding tourism development in a remote and wilderness area like the Faroe Islands, which is that the "provision of facilities and services harbours the risk of reducing the essential qualities that attract the visitors in the first place" (Boller et al., 2010, p. 320). This dilemma is a long-term issue, which is also very much at play in the Faroe Islands, especially as there is so much focus on positive authentic tourism experiences. This can also be related to my own hiking experience, because currently there are not many facilities and services in the Faroe Islands, which I experienced myself. However, this feature also added to the sense of being almost alone in the Faroe Islands. If this is going to change, maybe some tourists will perceive this as a bad thing.

In relation to the hiking routes I also noticed while I was at the Faroe Islands, that communication and information is lacking in relation to the local population. Some of the locals that I talked with, when I was asking for directions to the hiking routes had absolutely no idea about where the trails were. In one small town I asked a group of people, who were having a barbecue in their garden, for directions to the hiking route in their village, but no of them knew where is was. They did not even know that there was a hiking route in their village. I found the hiking route eventually, just a few hundred meters from where I met the group of people. This demonstrates that there clearly is a lack of communication and information from VisitFaroeIslands to people in the smaller villages. Haugland et al. (2011), point to how important it is to communication about services and products both within the destination and to other destinations. In the future there might be coming more hiking tourists to the Faroe Islands, and therefore it is important to look at these issues. Tourism planners must consider the stories that are told by the tourists, and at the moment the stories about the approachability of these hiking routes can be better.

5.3.4 Sub-Conclusion

Innovative tourism initiatives in the Faroe Islands have and should be used to differentiate the destination from other destinations. The Sheep View campaign has been a great example of a successful innovative initiative in the Faroe Islands, as its branding value has been significant. Many stakeholders believe that the campaign and the fact that the Faroe Islands is promoted on social media has had a great impact in terms of attracting tourists to come to the Faroe Islands. Tourism initiatives can be crucial in order to attract younger tourists, who want more action-based activities. Therefore tourism initiatives are crucial in the Faroe Islands, as the aim is to attract younger tourists to come. The main goal in the Faroe Islands is to attract people with different interests, such as hiking and foodies, as they use more money than the average tourists.

6.0 Policy Making and Common Ownership in the Faroe Islands

6.1 Policy Planning in the Faroe Islands

Policy planning in a destination like the Faroe Islands is very complex, because there are various subsystems to consider, such as the environment, the environment and the social welfare system. Furthermore, in a destination like the Faroe Islands, it is also crucial to look at the role of the state regarding tourism management, planning and development, as the state has a powerful role. It is also important to consider different jurisdictions, for instance national or municipality governments, who have different power and goals regarding tourism (Hall, Müller & Saarinen, 2009). Looking at the given destination, the keywords are e.g. coordination, legislations and regulation, planning and entrepreneurship.

The legislation in the Faroe Islands at the moment is inadequate according to some of the people that I talked with. According to Jóhan Pauli Helgason, who is adviser in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, "at the moment we are in the process of formulating a new set of legislation, because at the moment we don't have any legislation regarding the protection of the natural environment" (Appendix 2, l. 33-35). Furthermore, he also notes,

> "the Faroe Islands are receiving more tourists, which is a positive trend for
> a new and growing industry, but there are also concerns that need to be
> addressed, as such a small community needs to protect our nature and the
> environment so that the unspoilt environment remains unspoilt and
> attractive" (Travel Trade Outbound Scandinavia, 2017).

The legislation process in the Faroe Islands is long and difficult, and according to Friðun Jacobsen it will take some time before the legislation is here (Appendix 4). She believes that it is crucial that something happens, as an examples she mentioned Mykines, "so many tourists are arriving there during the summer months. The island is one of the highlights in the Faroe Islands, because it attracts people that are interested in nature and birds. If we lose it, then we lose some of our own identity, and that is a shame" (Appendix 4, l. 19-22). However, it is tricky to both encourage tourism in a country like the Faroe Islands, and at the same time keep nature unspoiled.

According to Haugland et al. (2011), destination capabilities, coordination at the destination level and inter-destination bridge ties are important factors to consider when looking at destination development. Friðun Jacobsen believes that coordination at the destination level is present in terms

of policy making in the Faroe Islands, as "they have asked us about we think in terms of how we should work with development internally, and what development model we should use, and who should have the main responsibility" (Appendix 4, l. 3-5). "They "in this context are both the political system and VisitFaroeIslands, because both of them focus on policymaking and destination development. VisitFaroeIslands is just about to publish a report about destination development in the Faroe Islands, which for instance both Friðun Jacobsen and Kent Lundquist Christensen look forward to see. Especially, Friðun Jacobsen looks forward to this rapport, because "yes, they do consult us in this matter, but the question is where we are going, and how we move on, because time is running out" (Appendix 4, l. 8-9). Kent Lindquist Christensen also believes that the tradition regarding tourism development in the Faroe Islands needs to change, "we need to put new glasses on, and look at the Faroe Islands from the tourists' perspectives, and not just from our own perspective… It should not be our perception of the Faroe Islands that control what the tourists should experience here" (Appendix 3, l. 197-198 + 210-211). This demonstrates that even though there is some kind of coordination at the destination level in the Faroe Islands, there are obviously some challenges in relation to destination development and policy planning. Especially legislation about the protection of the natural environment is something that the majority of the people I talked with are worried about. However, there are many actors to consider in a destination like the Faroe Islands, as well as different capabilities and resources.

VisitFaroeIslands has just recently decided to focus on destination development, because their primary goal has been to attract tourists to come to the Faroe Islands. According to Guri Højgaard, VisitFaroeIslands, "is going to establish a new development department, and we need to hire two persons to it, because we need to focus more on development" (Appendix 1, l.88-89). One of the main tasks of the development departments is to "support nature-protection initiatives and initiatives aiming at a sustainable tourism industry in the Faroe Islands" (Travel Trade Outbound Scandinavia, 2017). Friðun Jacobsen believes it is a step in the right direction, because

> "earlier we just focus on getting the tourists up here, but we never thought about what we should do, when the tourists arrived here. We should have thought about it before, because now it is much more difficult, and there are increasing demands from abroad. We need to think about how to give everyone a great experience here, and how to protect our amazing nature" (Appendix 4, l. 53-57).

There have been few initiatives in the Faroe Islands regarding destination development and policy planning, for instance expansion of the season. However, VisitFaroeIslands has focused more intensely on the economic sustainability of development initiatives rather than just focusing on the sustainable part of it, "from the beginning sustainability was also important to me, and everyone talked about sustainability, but it is also very important that there is economical sustainability in what you do" (Appendix 1, l. 26-28). Guri Højgaard believes that while sustainability is important, it is not the most important aspect of development initiatives and policy planning. When looking at the given destination, it is clear that there are some disputes about policy planning, because people have different perceptions regarding what is considered a challenge and what is considered a possibility. Nevertheless, everyone agrees on the need for legislations in terms of protecting the natural environment.

6.1.1 Inspiration from Iceland and Common Ownership in the Faroe Islands

In terms of possibilities regarding policy making in the Faroe Islands, benchmarking techniques as argued by Haugland et al. (2011) have already been applied in the Faroese context. VisitFaroeIslands and the political system in the Faroe Islands have compared the Faroe Islands with Iceland as a tourism destination, and they have looked at different dimensions in order to identify specific gaps. As a result, the Faroe Islands have the possibility of developing strategies and actions that can improve its own performance compared to Iceland in relation to tourism development. According to Jóhan Pauli Helgason, Iceland is both a role model and a scare story;

> "it is amazing what has happened in Iceland when you look at the growth
> in tourism. It is the biggest industry in Iceland now, and the Icelandic
> economy is primarily based on tourism. It has opened our eyes in terms of
> the possibilities, but we don't want to have the same conditions as they
> have right now" (Appendix 2, l. 117-119).

Haugland et al. (2011) call these inter-destination bridge ties, which they regard as an important dimension in terms of destination development. According to Haugland et al., (2011), "for both the destination as a unit and the individual firms, it is also important to be connected to the wider region and other destination as such connection be valuable sources for exchange of information and knowledge" (p. 278). These ties can be between difference entities, and the Faroe Islands collaborate with several other destinations, according to Guri Højgaard, "we collaborate a lot with Iceland and Greenland. We have a cooperation that is called NATA, North Atlantic Travel Association, where all three directors of tourism are involved. We have a very close collaboration in

terms of participating in different activities around the world and so on" (Appendix 1, l.95-97). One of the goals of such ties is that less developed destinations can acquire information and knowledge from more professional and efficient destinations (Haugland et al., 2011).

Everyone that I talked with in the Faroe Islands highlighted that they did not want to have the same conditions as in Iceland, and while it is hard to be prepared for such development, it is obvious that policy planners like Jóhan Pauli Helgason take the Icelandic scenario into consideration. The request for new legislation in order to protect the natural environment in the Faroe Islands is an example of how the Faroe Islands can avoid ending up with the same situation as the one in Iceland. Moreover, it demonstrates that there is a desire and willingness among the local stakeholders to hinder that the Faroe Islands will have the same situation as Iceland.

Common ownership is another way to avoid having the same situation in the Faroe Islands, as they have in Iceland. Haugland et al. (2011) argue that in terms of common ownership all the actors within the destination must share their capabilities and collaborate with each other in order to move the resources from one actor to the entire destination. Moreover, it can be profitable for all actors within the destination if they work together to create an image that is based on shared attributes (Haugland et al., 2011).

When looking at the given destination it is definitely the case, because whenever the different travel agencies and VisitFaroeIslands go out and brand the Faroe Islands at different fairs, they brand themselves as one destination and never as just one company. According to Kent Lindquist Christensen, "the competition about the tourists happens later, because all of us have one goal, which is to attract people to come to the Faroe Islands, and then we fight about them later" (Appendix 3, l.95-98). This common ownership is important for the future of the Faroe Islands according to Friðun Jacobsen, "we are selling the Faroe Islands as one destination, we don't sell our own company, it is first and foremost important that we sell the Faroe Islands. We have to do it in that order" (Appendix 4, l. 100-101). This demonstrates how common ownership can be used as a tool to move resources to the entire destination rather than just being in the hands of one actor. To have valuable coordination between small companies within one destination can sometimes be difficult, but apparently not in the Faroe Islands, where the different actors are willing to work together. In the future this willingness can be regarded as a great possibility for further collaboration between the different actors in the Faroe Islands, which can also have a positive effect

on policy making, as it can make the process smoother. Below is an example of how policy planning is currently working in the Faroe Islands.

6.1.2 The Case of Mykines

Mykines is one of the 18 main islands in the Faroe archipelago, and geographically it is the Faroe Islands' most westerly outpost. It is a small island that is only 10 km^2. Today only fourteen people are permanently living on the island, and there are only 40 houses on the entire island, compared to earlier in for instance 1940, where there were 170 people living in Mykines (mykines.info). Mykines is truly a special island, where people can see kittiwakes, gannets, fulmars, oystercatchers, whimbrels and puffins. Mykines is especially famous for its nature and its bird life, and there are thousands of different bird species in Mykines. The birds' breed during the summer months, which attract thousands of tourists, and the island, is one of the main highlights of the Faroe Islands. You can virtually see all of the Faroese bird species, and the most famous bird of the island is the majestic gannet. In the Faroe Islands, the gannet is considered the king of the Faroese birds because of its size and its wild plunge towards the sea for small fish and squid.

Last year, "there were 17,000 people out there during the summer months" (Appendix 3, l. 123). It is only possible to sail to Mykines from 1st of May to 1st of September, while it is possible to fly with a helicopter to the island all year around. However, both forms of transportation are weather dependent (mykines.info). On VisitVagar website a trip to Mykines is described as

> "shortly after the arrival to the Mykines Village, the adventure starts. The
> trip will go to the islands' lighthouse, where you will feel like you are at
> end of the world. Listen to the quite sounds from sheep, birds and your tour
> guide, and you will then experience what peacefulness really mean"
> (www.visitvagar.fo).

This description might be contested in the future, because last year in four months 17,000 people visited Mykines, and there will probably be arriving even more people in the future. Therefore the peacefulness might be challenged. According to many stakeholders, the situation on Mykines needs to be handled quickly, "there are so many people out there, and when they arrive at shore, they just walk everywhere around the island, which is not good, because it destroys the bird life" (Appendix 4, l. 22-24). According to Kent Lindquist Christensen, regulation is key, because "what will Mykines be like if 25,000 people are arriving there this summer? How do we make sure that the island is not completely damaged? We need regulations" (Appendix 3, l.123-124). Friðun Jacobsen suggests "

like other places, we need to sell only a specific number of tickets everyday,

or whenever people arrive at Mykines they have to go through a visitor

centre, who give them a guide and tell them where to walk. It will also

mean that there will be greater funds for development initiatives on the

island, which is very much needed" (Appendix 4, l. 26-29).

After my visit at the Faroe Islands, in the end of April, VisitFaroeIslands has launched a new initiative on Mykines, in order to protect Mykines' nature. According to VisitFaroeIslands' website,

"the island of Mykines is one of the most beautiful places in the whole country. Its rich birdlife and awe-inspiring beauty have made it into one of the most popular destinations for travellers. It is of utmost importance that the birdlife and nature on the island are preserved and protected. As such, new regulations have been implemented" (www.visitfaroeislands.com)

These new regulations mean that each person travelling to Mykines must pay DKK 100 if they wish to travel beyond the small village area. The money collected is earmarked for maintenance of the birdlife and nature on the island. Moreover, these new guidelines also include that "each person who wishes to travel beyond the village must be accompanied by a certified guide. This is to ensure that everyone sticks to the outlines path and that the birds are disturbed as little as possible" (www.visitfaroeislands.com). This new initiative shows that there is a willingness to protect the nature on the Faroe Islands. However, these new guidelines still need to be implemented completely, as there are still some doubts and concerns about who is going to make sure that people pay this amount. Nevertheless, this is a small step in the right direction according to many stakeholders.

6.2 The Faroe Islands as an all year-round tourist destination

One of the many things that caught my attention while I was in the Faroe Islands was how important it was for the majority of the local stakeholders to expand the season. Again and again they emphasised the importance of expanding the season, in order to attract tourists to come outside the summer months. According to Guri Højgaard, "you cannot continue to develop products, if you do not have enough visitors, because then you will die anyway… As a result we have focused a lot on expanding the season" (Appendix 1, l. 32-35). There are several reasons behind the desire to expand the season in the Faroe Islands according to the people I talked with, e.g. one is in terms of investment, one is in terms of creating a strong destination, and a third one is in terms of resources.

According to Jóhan Pauli Helgason,

> "We need a more stable stream of tourists, and that is also a condition for
> tourism, if you want to have it as a profitable industry. Nobody wants to
> invest in anything if there is only tourists during the summer months, it
> requires a longer season, if order for tourism to be profitable" (Appendix 2,
> l. 59-61).

The investment aspect is crucial in terms of expanding the season, because it gives the foundation for new initiatives, which again help to attract new tourists to the Faroe Islands. The season also needs to be expanded, if tourism is going to be a stronger and more stable economic contributor to the Faroese economy, which is the intention. According to Guri Højgaard, "our vision is to be an extra economic source of income in the Faroese economy, which must be build on a sustainable foundation in relation to the people, socially, and the country" (Appendix 1, l. 128-129).

Another reason for expanding the season is regarding the use of resources, because as hotels are fully booked throughout the summer months, there are no more available resources during this period of time. Instead if more tourists were arriving in the shoulder season it would also mean greater, stabile income for the hotels. Currently, the hotels in the Faroe Islands are suffering from economic default. According to Kent Lindquist Christensen,

> "the hotels in the Faroe Islands are suffering, and they are dilapidated, and
> the only time there get renovated is when they are sold. This is because the
> season is so short, which makes it difficult for them to earn money. If we
> expand the season, then the money they earn in the shoulder season will be
> surplus, and maybe the hotels will be easier to run" (Appendix 3, l. 148-
> 152).

The current challenge regarding the hotel capacity in the Faroe Islands is that some people just want to build more hotels; so more tourists can arrive during the summer months e.g. Guri Højgaard (Appendix 1). However, as Kent Lindquist Christensen mentioned above, he believes that instead of building new hotels, it will be much better to fill the hotels that are already there, but just outside the summer months, which will also stabilise the hotel running (Appendix 3). Jóhan Pauli Helgason also wants more regulations when it comes to building new hotels (Appendix 2), because it will help to control the building of new hotels. Moreover, new hotel regulations will also help to protect the natural environment, as hotels then will not be allowed to pop up just anywhere.

When you visit the Faroe Islands it is clear that there is a problem with hotels, because there are many empty, old, abandoned hotels spread around the country, especially in the smaller cities. One local sheep farmer in the small town, Viðareiðih that lies on the northernmost settlement in the Faroe Islands, told me,

> "there simply isn't enough people coming here, so we cannot have a hotel here, at least not one that can earn money. The owner of the hotel had to change it to a hotel that only is open to large groups or for a wedding, because it was not possible to run it as a normal hotel".

This also demonstrates that perhaps especially in the smaller villages it will be difficult to have hotels that are open all year round, because there simply is no foundation or need for it. At least not at the moment, but maybe it will change in the future? According to Friðun Jacobsen, who agrees with Jóhan Pauli Helgason in terms of regulations of hotels, as she wants to prevent the building of five star hotels in the Faroe Islands, "we don't have five star hotels, and I don't think I would be good if we had. It wouldn't be natural. Instead it would be better to have something that will be well received and fit our nature, something that wouldn't be empty the rest of the year" (Appendix 4, l.159-161). Furthermore, Friðun Jacobsen also believes that in order to build more hotels, it would require that the tourists are not only coming in the summer months, because otherwise it would not be a good investment. It will however be difficult to fill the hotels up outside the summer months according to Kent Lindquist Christensen, "best case scenario would be if tourism is at the same level as it is now, however with tourists coming all year around. But this is probably just wishful thinking" (Appendix 3, l.145-147). According to both Friðun Jacobsen and Kent Lindquist Christensen an expansion of the season would demand a change of the way people are thinking tourism in the Faroe Islands.

As said by both of the travel companies that I talked with, GreenGate Incoming and Make Travel, there need to be a shift in how the Faroese are thinking about tourism. According to Friðun Jacobsen from GreenGate Incoming, "people think of the Faroe Islands as a summer destination, and we do it as well. We have to change that perception, so first and foremost we need to think about the Faroe Islands as an all year round destination" (Appendix 4, l.78-80). Kent Lindquist Christensen agrees, "we need to think outside the box, and we need to stop looking at the weather as a limitation, because it is what people want to experience, and that is an experience in itself"

(Appendix 3, l.79-81). The way forward according to Friðun Jacobsen is "to involve local stakeholders who want to be involved, and to look at discounts, because there need to be a high season and a low season in terms of prices in order to attract tourists to come in the low season" (Appendix 4, l.80-82). Haugland et al. (2011) refer to how important it is that a destination communicates about their products and services to the market in order to be a successful destination. This is exactly what is happening in the Faroe Islands at the moment, because according to Friðun Jacobsen, "we are working together with our agents and our network to get them to tell to people that the Faroe Islands as a destination is just as exciting during the winter period as it is during the summer months" (Appendix 4, l.82-84). This process takes time, but both Kent Lindquist Christensen and Friðun Jacobsen have noticed that it is slowly changing. According to Kent Lindquist Christensen, "for the first time this year we had people coming during Christmas and New Year, and I have talked with other local stakeholders who had the same experience" (Appendix 3, l. 72-74). He also highlights that there almost is no change in how the Faroe Islands look no matter what time people come to visit, "the Faroe Islands is just as beautiful in November as it is in June. The temperature is often the same, but perhaps the islands look a little more brown in November, but otherwise it is almost the same, because we don't have major temperature differences" (Appendix 3, l. 76-79). Friðun Jacobsen has also noted the change, "we can see that more and more people are coming in April and October" (Appendix 4, l.85). So what are the local stakeholders during in terms of attracting more people to come outside the summer months? This will be discussed in the section below.

6.2.1 Attracting New Tourist Segments to the Faroe Islands

One of the things that the local stakeholder focus on in terms of how they can attract people to come outside the summer months is to focus on other segments of people. Usually, the typical tourist a few years back in the Faroe Islands was 55+ according to Guri Højgaard (Appendix 1, l. 58), and according to Kent Lindquist Christensen, they usually were staying 7-8 days, renting a car and driving around, and that was it (Appendix 3, l. 37). These types of tourists are still coming to the Faroe Islands, but now younger people are also arriving in the Faroe Islands. According to Guri Højgaard, "it is because of our focus on the digital marked. It has really paid off" (Appendix 1, l. 63). Kent Lindquist Christensen points out that the younger tourists are coming to the Faroe Islands because of a variety of things, "we have deliberately branded the Faroe Islands as a place, where there is action and activities, for instance rappelling, diving and speedboats. It is a segment that we

have never seen before, but because it has been branded, we now see a change" (Appendix 3, l.38-41).

According to Lucy Fuggle (2015), it is important for destinations to align tours and activities to fit the need of young travellers, because they represent "20% of the world's tourists. [And] by 2020, this market will be taking 47% more international trips than in 2013" (www.trekksoft.com). Moreover, according to Fuggle (2015) young travellers are looking for, "unique and authentic experiences, action-based activities, companies that listen to their feedback, opportunities to learn something new, and word of mouth recommendations" (www.trekksoft.com). VisitFaroeIslands has focused a lot on leisure tourists, who has special interests, for instance hiking, diving, dining, bird watching, knitting etc. (Appendix 1, l. 39-40). According to Guri Højgaard, "people who travel according to their interests, they are more willing to use more money. Our mission has never been to attract as many people to the Faroe Islands as possible, but instead to attract as much money as possible" (Appendix 1, l. 42-44). Experience-based activities that take place in the Faroe Islands, for instance rappelling and diving, can be used to differentiate the Faroe Islands from other destinations, as these activities take place in a unique location. In this context, according to Jensen and Prebensen (2015), it is important to focus on the understanding of tourist experiences, regardless of the segment, and how values can be created for tourists who are visiting a specific destination and doing different activities there, which can contribute to increase long-term-value-creation potential for tourism businesses. An important issue in the tourism industry today is for destinations to encourage the visitors to stay longer, as it would impact the economical sustainability for the country or region, as well as ensure less pollution due to the decreasing need for travelling, which different attractive activities can help achieving (Jensen & Prebensen, 2015).

Kent Lindquist Christensen hopes that tourism in the future will be directed even more towards younger tourists, "who wants action, and who seek activities beyond what the nature offers, because it will benefit the local populations as well, as they will also have access to these activities, which would make it more fun for the younger people to stay and remain in the Faroe Islands" (Appendix 3, l.158-161). Hence, tourism can be used as a tool to develop activities in the Faroe Islands that is also available to the younger generation in the Faroe Islands. Additionally, tourism can also be a useful tool in terms of other developments initiatives in the Faroe Islands, for instance better infrastructure. Jóhan Pauli Helgason hopes that tourism can be an industry that really matters in the

Faroe Islands, "both in terms of economic growth, but also that it can engage many people, which would have an enormous affect as it will increase the wellbeing and thus increase the population in the Faroe Islands" (Appendix 2, l. 177-179). There are more and more activities available to the tourists in the Faroe Islands these days, but there are also limitations to these activities. This is obvious to spot, especially when you travel outside the summer season, where many things are shut down, because there still are no demands for it. It demonstrates that there still is some way to go, before tourists can experience these activities outside the summer months. It will definitely require that more people are coming in the shoulder season, in order for these activities to be economically sustainable. The expansion of the season and the offer of activities are closely connected, and it is difficult to determine when or if this development will happen in the Faroe Islands.

Another segment that VisitFaroeIslands is focused on is business tourists. Specifically, they focus on MICE, which is a type of tourism that include large groups that focus on Meetings, incentives, conference and exhibitions (Appendix 3, l.10-11). MICE is a really important tourists segment in the Faroe Islands, because according to Friðun Jacobsen, "it is a segment where we can offer something to them all year round. We can offer something to both smaller and larger groups, and we can offer activities to them both on the water, in the air, and in the nature. So we need more of them" (Appendix 4, l. 86-88). According to Friðun Jacobsen, MICE tourism is also the reason why more and more people are coming outside the summer months, before there has been an increase in people coming in May and October, where the events take place (Appendix 4). MICE tourists alongside leisure tourists can definitely help to expand the season in the Faroe Islands, but there are also challenges related to expanding the season and to offer more activities to the tourists. The younger tourists want more activities, "they want fast boats, and they want to fly with a helicopter. All of it increases the noise level. There are some locals who are not so fond of all that noise" (Appendix 4, l.44-46). The action-based activities can also scare the tourists who are seeking peace and quiet, and they can also scare the local population, because "some people feel that they no longer can live their life in peace and harmony, because they get disturbed by the tourists and their activities" (Appendix 2, l.53-54). However, there are also people who see tourism as the saver of the local villages, because according to Jóhan Pauli Helgason "we have witnessed that people move away from the smaller villages, but tourism can create some new welfare conditions which mean that people will remain in the smaller villages" (Appendix 2, l. 51-53). The local stakeholders

emphasise that in order for tourism to be a saver for the smaller villages in the Faroe Islands it is important to involve the local community.

Friðun Jacobsen believes that it is important that tourism planners involve the local community, because if nothing happens in the smaller villages, then the entire tourism image of the Faroe Islands will be contested (Appendix 4, l.167-168). Moreover she emphasises that

> "it is important for us to contribute to the smaller villages, where we send tourists to. It is important that we can buy something, or that we only use their own local guide, so we only use their own local resources or maybe we can help the locals to build or start some local initiatives" (Appendix 4, l. 169-171).

Jerome McElroy and Rachel Dodds (2007) believe that the Faroe Islands should move towards "profitable tourism that is socially acceptable to the host population and environmentally sustainable for future generations" (p.70). It is especially important in an island destination as the Faroe Islands, which economy relies heavily on fisheries and are resource dependent. According to Friðun Jacobsen, it will be sad if policy planners only focused on the capital and the area around it (Appendix 4, l. 171-172). Kent Lindquist Christensen also believes that it is important to develop the smaller villages, because there is a need for it, "too many places people cannot use their money, and they really want to. They really want to buy something, either food or a souvenir, but there is nothing to buy" (Appendix 3, l. 192-194). This suggest that further destination development in the smaller villages in the Faroe Islands is required if you ask the local stakeholders, but the potential or desire to develop is not present in all of the smaller villages, and therefore it will be interesting to see what will happen in the nearest future.

6.2.2 Sub-Conclusion

Policy making is challenging in the Faroe Islands, as the there are many powerful stakeholders to take into consideration, and the policy making process is long. Local stakeholders believe that the need for new legislation in terms of protection of the natural environment is required as fast as possible. Moreover, some stakeholders believe that there is a need for new regulations in terms of building new hotels. The case of Mykines is a great example of policy making in the Faroe Islands, as the new guidelines to Mykines is a step in the right direction in terms of protecting the birdlife and the nature on the island. It will be interesting to see if these guidelines are enough.

Many stakeholders believe that the expansion of the season is important in order to create a successful destination, because otherwise people would not want to invest in the Faroe Islands. It is however not an easy task, because there are some challenges, for instance how to attract more people to come outside the summer months, how to involve the local community, and how to ensure stable income for the tourism operators.

7.0 Conclusion

This thesis has sought to investigate tourism development in the Faroe Islands by adapting a case study approach, as suggested by Bent Flyvbjerg. This project has examined the different challenges and possibilities of turning the Faroe Islands from primarily a summer destination into an all-year around tourist destination. By going to the Faroe Islands on a field trip, and by taking a participant observation approach has enabled this thesis to investigate and explore the Faroe Islands from the tourists' perspectives. As this case study shows, there are many possibilities in terms of turning the Faroe Islands into an all-year around destination, because of the common ownership attitude as well as the launching of new action-based initiatives. Furthermore, making interviews with different local stakeholders has enabled this project to reveal deep nuanced insights into the way they look at future tourism development in the Faroe Islands. A common goal for most of them is to expand the season by attracting new segments of tourists to come to the Faroe Islands. Their main focus is to attract specific segments, for instance leisure tourists, who have special interests such as fishing, bird watching, food or diving. Another segment that they want to attract is business tourists, because they will come outside the summer months and they use more money than the average tourist. The main aim for VisitFaroeIslands is not to attract enormous amounts of tourists, but to attract tourists that are willing to use more money. There are great possibilities of turning the Faroe Islands into an all-year around destination, and it will create more stable income for hotels and tourism operations. It will also be great in terms of spreading the use of resources, and it will also mean that more people can work in the tourism industry fulltime.

There is however also challenges in terms of turning the Faroe Islands into an all-year around destination. One of them is to make sure that the local development can follow tourism development in the Faroe Islands, which would otherwise create further challenges. Another one is how to attract the tourists to come outside the summer months. According to several stakeholders the problem is that the Faroe Islands do not look at itself as a destination that can function outside the summer months, so there need to be a change in this perception. Another challenge is how to involve the local community in order to offer more attractive tourism activities. It is also important that the local community is involved in order to create a stronger destination, where the resources are not only centred in the capital.

Another aim for most of the stakeholders in the Faroe Islands is the need for new legislation regarding protection of the natural environment. The rise in tourists as well as the local's perception of the situation in Iceland has demonstrated the need for this new legislation, as the Faroese nature needs protection before too many tourists will arrive and destroy it. The local stakeholders welcome this legislation, but for some of them, the economic sustainability is just as an important feature that needs to be considered. The case of Mykines demonstrates that there is a will in the Faroe Islands in terms of launching initiatives that protects the environment. There are, however, still some way to go, and the only the future can tell if the case of Mykines is going to be successful. Currently there are challenges in terms of the high number of tourists that are arriving during the summer months, due to the fact that all the islands' resources such as infrastructure and hotel capacity are almost worn-out. Some of the stakeholders talk about building new hotels in order to accommodate more tourists during the summer months, but not everyone agrees. Some fear that it will destroy the hotel industry, because it is very hard for the hotels that are currently running to make profit during the shoulder season, and building new hotels will only challenge them even more. Other stakeholders believe that the building of new hotels will destroy the nature if the law does not regulate the building of new hotels. Thus, they do not find this specific development desirable.

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