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# How are European Tourism Firms Complying with Sustainable Development Goal 8.5?

A comparable study of abroad and local workers



*Photograph of Beach in Samos, (Romskaug 2022)*

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# Abstract

The tourism industry is an important employer providing millions of job opportunities globally. Their compliance to United Nations' sustainable development goal 8 is therefore highly relevant. Accordingly, the purpose of this thesis was to investigate how European tourism firms active in the Swedish market comply with SDG target 8.5 surrounding decent work. The aim was to fill in the existing knowledge gap by comparing abroad and local workers. Decent work has been limited to three criteria; fair wage, work security and personal development, that should be fulfilled in order for tourism employers to maintain SDG 8.5. A qualitative method was used with an abductive research approach, where interviews have been conducted with HR managers, abroad workers and local workers. The theories used to analyze the collected empirical data are the job characteristics model and the two factor theory. From the analysis we established that employers for both abroad and local workers were lacking in complying to decent work. Additionally, we found that different living situations mattered where local workers in general were put in more vulnerable situations and had lower compliance to decent work than abroad workers. We concluded that employers' of local workers lacked in all three criteria of decent work while abroad workers' employers did comply with fair wage but only partially with work security and personal development.

## **Keywords**

Tourism, SDG 8, SDG Target 8.5, Sustainable Tourism, Local Workers, Abroad Workers, Tourism Employers, Decent Work, European Tourism

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

Tourism is one of the most important industries of our time, providing significant economic growth and 1 out of 10 global employment opportunities (UNWTO 2021). In 2019 the industry was alone responsible for 10 percent of the global GDP, amounting to 19 trillion US dollars. Since COVID-19 the tourism industry has experienced a decline causing its worst years on record. Tourist arrivals decreased with 68% in Europe, 2020, and in total over 100 million direct jobs were at risk (McKinsey 2020). With increasing vaccination coverage a more positive outlook is expected in the year 2022 where European tourism is anticipated to grow significantly and rise to 20% below pre-pandemic levels (European Travel Commission 2022).

As tourism is starting to recover its sustainable impacts are once again becoming more relevant. Sustainable tourism is far from a new concept but has been gaining more attention in recent years. In 2015 the United Nations (UN) developed 17 sustainable development goals described as a “universal call to action” to solve global problems for the benefit of humanity. Sustainable tourism is specifically mentioned in Sustainable development goal number 8 (SDG 8) surrounding decent work and economic growth, where decent work takes on the social aspect of sustainability. It centers around fighting unemployment, providing security, fair wages and general well being in the workplace, particularly for youth and women (UN n.d.-b). This goal becomes especially relevant for the tourism industry as women and youth, among other vulnerable groups, are overrepresented (Eurofound 2012). Tourism is also a labor intensive sector by nature and therefore has major potential to contribute in this area. The industry has the ability to contribute both as an employer but also through the multiplier effect which causes additional job opportunities for local businesses such as restaurants and souvenirs shops, increasing job opportunities for all (ILO 2017).

Limitations and challenges for the tourism industry needs to also be highlighted. Working arrangements are many times informal and rarely full time, leaving less room for unions, security and developing worker and employer relationships. Many employees are low-skilled and from vulnerable groups in society, being more likely to find themselves exploited (ILO

2017). These challenges are being reflected in reality. Tourism employers are notorious for offering wages below average combined with long work days at uncomfortable hours. Additionally the industry is known to have few career opportunities and high employee turnover, much due to its seasonality (Eurofound 2012; Janes & Wisnom 2011; GTP 2021). Employees in tourism have therefore become an important subject in research and sustainable development goals.

The complexity of business models, networks and different cultures results in a need for smooth, well functioning and effective employment in the tourism industry. Companies are facing a turbulent and fast changing environment, making management and personnel more important in order to respond quickly to changes. Additionally good management and low staff turnover rates are mentioned as prerequisites for learning in the organization (Mariani & Baggio 2012). In another study it has also been shown that the quality of customer service is critical in order to reach customer satisfaction and profitability within tourism firms (Haghkhah et al. 2011). Haghkhah et al. (2011) continue to state that high levels of job satisfaction and good employment morale is needed in order to provide good customer treatment, making corporate culture and coherence important when dispersing employees around the world. These researches signify how important personnel is for tourism companies which bring importance to their working conditions. Social sustainability will therefore not only benefit employees but also the tourism companies' own success. Accordingly, our research will investigate how tourism companies comply with SDG 8 and specifically decent work surrounding employees from different locations in the interest of both tourism firms and the UN.

### *1.1.1 Decent work definition*

SDG 8 is divided into several targets surrounding decent work and economic growth. This thesis will target only decent work aspects of SDG 8 and relate this to the tourism industry. We will focus on target 8.5 stating “By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value”. The UN's website offers an explanation for the term ‘decent work’ and mentions several factors, these include; fair wages, social protection for families, work security, productive work and opportunities for personal

development and social integration (UN n.d.-b). Due to resource and time limitations we will focus on three of these factors; fair wage, work security and personal development.

Fair wages is commonly defined as covering the cost of living, although no official definition exists. Civil Society Reflection Group (2018) state in their annual report that a fair wage should adapt to inflation and account for the cost of living based on evidence, when discussing how EU minimum wages can maintain SDG 8. In a study on decent work it has been stated that wages should provide enough to participate in society in addition to covering basic expenses, and mentions activities such as eating out and going on a holiday. Further, fair wages should be considered fair in relation to similar jobs (Stuart et al. 2016).

Work security is defined by International Labor Organization Conventions (ILO Conventions) (n.d.) as working conditions that promote well being and security for health and safety. Where health and safety include mental health aspects and stress in addition to physical protection against occupational hazards and violence. Stuart et al. (2016) state in their study that job security alludes to a formal contract which ideally should be permanent and secure. Similarly, ILO (n.d) explains that employment security should offer protection against potential job loss during economic fluctuations or other reasons for dismissals. ILO (n.d.) further states that groups especially vulnerable for dismissals are within non-standard work which constitute of; “temporary contracts, temporary agency and dispatched work, dependent self-employment, marginal part-time work” (ILO n.d.) and is therefore especially relevant to the tourism sector.

Personal development would reflect the dimension in decent work which García-Rodríguez et al. (2021, p.7) call “lifelong learning in employment, continuous improvement and professional development” in a report regarding decent work in hospitality. The term is related to developing professionally but also learning and using skills within the occupation. Additionally, important in this dimension of decent work are opportunities for promotion and reaching job satisfaction. Stuart et al. (2016) similarly reveals career progression, skill development and a sense of meaning within the job as important factors for decent work and personal development.

## 1.2 Problem Discussion

Tourism companies are working in a complex market considering their large and extensive network, meeting with many different cultures in a fast changing environment. An understanding of the complexity in the industry is achieved when studying big tourism companies' websites, such as TUI Sweden. The Swedish subsidiary is a part of TUI group, a company with several subsidiaries and ownership in both aircrafts, hotels and other facilities (TUI n.d.-a). Collaborations which add to their extensive network and create a complex market. Employees' arrangements will therefore vary within the tourism industry. Large tourism companies, such as TUI and Apollo, commonly offer employment working abroad in tourist resorts for residents of countries in the EU and Britain (TUI n.d.-b; Apollo n.d.). Other employees in tourist destinations are residents of the country, often employed by locally owned hotels. Considering these differences in arrangements, it is very possible that the employers' compliance to SDG 8 also varies. In our search for previous studies on SDG 8 and the tourism industry we found no sources comparing these groups of employees, possibly because of assumptions that abroad workers are not as vulnerable. We wish to challenge this assumption and perform a comparable study between these groups in relation to decent work. In this thesis we will refer to abroad workers and local workers. The intended meaning for abroad workers is Swedish residents working abroad in tourist resorts. By local workers we instead allude to tourism employees who are residents in the country of the tourist resort. Due to resource and time constraints only Swedish abroad workers will be studied in addition to local workers in European tourist resorts. With many abroad workers being seasonally employed the abroad respondents will also include those who previously have been employed in the years of 2019 to 2021.

There is comprehensive previous research in the tourism area, analyzing companies' work for maintaining SDG 8, when searching for tourism industry and SDG 8 at Google Scholar. The research is focused on different aspects of decent work and economic growth, mainly in broad perspectives such as interconnections between tourism and SDGs or gender equality (Alarcon & Cole 2018). Many papers are additionally searching for SDGs in the tourism industry in Africa and Asia which are more exposed areas compared to Europe (Trupp & Dolezal 2020; KC et al. 2021; Ali et al. 2013). To limit research this thesis will focus on only European tourism and specifically firms that are active in the Swedish market and owned by European companies.



From current research it becomes apparent that tourism is an important industry regarding economic growth, employment and local development (UNWTO 2021). We know how working conditions for local employees are looking in general. It has been stated in research that tourism employees often suffer from wages below average combined with long work days at uncomfortable hours. Additionally, many employees are seasonal workers which brings economic insecurity in addition to few career opportunities and high employee turnover that characterize the industry (Eurofound 2012; Janes & Wisnom 2011; GTP 2021). Tourism employees have also been said to be important for the company's ability to be profitable through adaptation to changing environments and learning (Mariani & Baggio 2012). Additionally, research has provided that good working conditions are important for employers in order to provide good customer treatment and indirect sales (Haghkhah, et al. 2011).

To the best of our knowledge, there is limited research available comparing abroad workers' and local workers' working conditions in the tourism industry. Our aim is to add knowledge to an ongoing discussion and fill in the knowledge gap existing in today's research. Many studies focus on Asian and African tourism in addition to not including abroad workers as study subjects. The European market is, however, still relevant. One out of ten Europeans work in tourism (Arato 2019) and when conducting a survey in Greece, the general opinion was that working conditions are demanding with low career prospects (GTP 2021). Pointing towards European tourism's need to further improve its compliance with SDG 8.5.

Comparing abroad workers and local employees will help find areas of improvement for SDG 8.5 and either further strengthen the argument for prioritizing local employees or bring light to an overlooked problem.

### 1.3 Purpose and Research Question

The purpose of this thesis is to identify how European tourism firms are complying with SDG target 8.5 surrounding decent work in terms of personal development, fair wages and work security. Through this thesis we aim to contribute to existing research by filling the current knowledge gap on comparing abroad and local workers in Europe. Following research question will be answered to carry out our purpose:

- How are European tourism firms complying to decent work in terms of fair wages, work security and personal development for abroad workers vs local workers?

## 1.4 Delimitation

Delimitations in this thesis had to be made due to resource and time constraints. Abroad workers interviewed in this thesis will all be residents of Sweden in addition to charter companies being limited to those that are active in the Swedish market. Due to seasonal employment being common for abroad workers, we will also interview those who worked previous seasons between the years of 2019 and 2021 but are not currently employed. The reason for this delimitation is that workers starting their employment 2022 might not yet have enough experience in this job to answer all of the interview questions. The countries of the tourist resorts which respondents for both abroad and local workers have been, or are currently, working in have been limited to Greece and Cyprus due to resource constraints.

## 2 THEORY

### 2.1 Job Characteristics Model

Job Diagnostic Survey (JBD) was designed by psychologists Greg R. Oldham and J. Richard Hackman in 1975 as a help in redesigning HR strategies. Today the model is commonly known as the job characteristics model and widely used in HR (Ali, et al. 2013). Oldham and Hackman (1975) explain how the purpose of the JBD is to gain benefits for the company and workforce, referred to as personal and work outcomes. To achieve this, five *core job characteristics* are made up of factors such as amount of feedback and level of independence, targeting working conditions for employees (Oldham & Hackman 1975).

Ali et al. (2013) writes how the core job characteristics are determinants of the three psychological stages in turn resulting in job satisfaction for employees, helping intrinsic motivation and organizational effectiveness. He continues to discuss the definition of job satisfaction and states that it generally “ refers to a person's feelings of satisfaction on the job, which acts as a motivation to work.” (p. 47). Job satisfaction has been an interesting topic for HR strategies as it helps motivate employees to work harder while also being a good cause as people spend a major part of their life in their workplace. Oldham and Hackman are two psychologists that sought to contribute in this area of research by determining general factors leading to job satisfaction (Ali et al. 2013). Job characteristics model describe how to reach the outcomes consisting of benefits for both employees and employers, which will be provided once core job characteristics and critical psychological stages have been fulfilled, as illustrated in Figure 1 (AIHR n.d.).

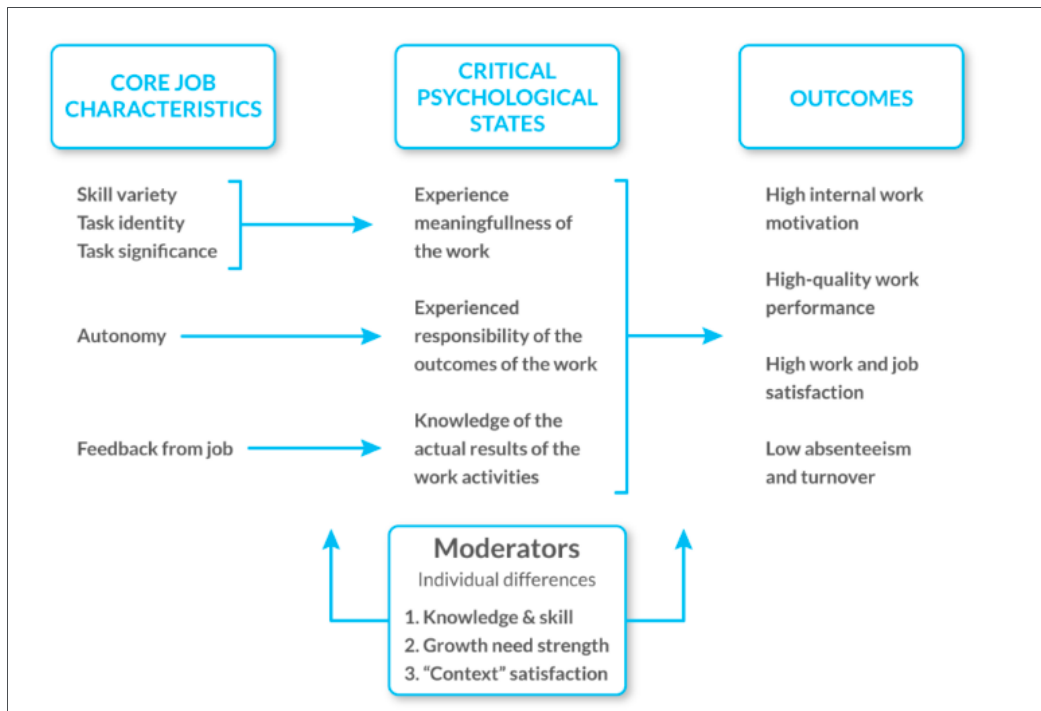


Figure 1: Job Characteristics Model. (Source: AIHR n.d.)

### 2.1.1 Core job characteristics

There are five job characteristics in the job characteristics model; Skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback from job, as illustrated in Figure 1. The first one is *skill variety* referring to the work activities, skills and talents that should vary within a job (Oldham & Hackman 1975). When we apply this to the tourism industry we look for a waiter, as an example, that not only serves food but also clean tables, help in the kitchen or performs other activities throughout the day. In Oldham & Hackman's model (1975) the core characteristics skill variety in combination with *task identity* and *task significance* will also help the employee experience meaningfulness within their work, illustrated in Figure 1.

*Task identity* measure to which degree the employee can identify with the end result of one's work performance. A higher identity to the end result would be gained when tasks are less divided and employees are involved from beginning to end (Oldham & Hackman 1975). Coelho and Augusto (2010) similarly state how the feeling of finding one's work worthwhile and meaningful is achieved through task identity. We would see an example of this as a hotel bartender which takes orders from their customers, serves drinks and receives payments for them, partaking in all parts of the service. Even higher task identity would be writing the menu.

*Task Significance* takes on a broader perspective measuring whether the employee feels that their work performance contributes to the organization and/or the community (Oldham & Hackman 1975). In tourism firms we see that a cleaner, for example, could find their quality of cleaning to be critical for the customer experience and the business' success. A cleaner could also perceive their task as so significant that the local development in their country will have a positive effect from their work, and thereby contributing to the community.

*Autonomy* looks at the amount of freedom employees experience in their work by looking at the level of independence and if employees are allowed to decide procedures in carrying out their tasks (Oldham & Hackman 1975). The autonomy characteristics can also be seen as a way for the employees to enhance their skills by having the freedom to try and learn new things and learn from mistakes (Coelho & Augusto 2010). An example of this within the tourism industry could be swim instructors which have freedom to plan their own swim classes and schedules. Autonomy will make the employee feel responsibility for the outcomes and thereby fulfill the second critical psychological stage of the job characteristics model (Oldham & Hackman 1975).

The last core job characteristic is *Feedback* which evaluates what information the employees receive on their quality of work performance (Oldham & Hackman 1975). Coelho and Augusto (2010) state how top management needs to provide feedback for the employee to know in what areas they need to improve and how. An example of this characteristic is a chef at a hotel that receives feedback, both positive and negative, on the quality of their food and therefore gains motivation and the knowledge on how to improve their cooking. The feedback characteristics will also help the employee achieve the third, and final, critical psychological stage concerning knowledge on one's performance and its results (Oldham & Hackman 1975). The relationship between core characteristics and critical psychological stages is also illustrated in Figure 1.

### *2.1.2 Three critical psychological stages*

Determinants of the job characteristics model's outcomes are three critical psychological stages which the employee reaches through previously mentioned job characteristics. Each critical psychological stage is a result of one or more core characteristics, these relationships

are illustrated in Figure 1. The first critical psychological stage considers how the employee must experience meaning in their work by finding it valuable and worthwhile. The second stage is feeling personally responsible for the assigned task and its outcomes, and lastly, knowing and understanding the quality and result of one's work performance. These psychological states will need to all be fulfilled in order to achieve the four outcomes (Oldham & Hackman 1975).

### *2.1.3 Outcomes and connections to SDG 8.5*

The personal outcomes are defined within the model in three categories, the first one being an overall degree of satisfaction in the job referred to as general satisfaction (job satisfaction). Further, Oldham & Hackman (1975) state that intrinsic motivation (high internal work motivation) captures the employee's perception of their performance, where self motivation comes from feeling positive feelings when working effectively. They also mention specific satisfaction, within the personal outcomes, which helped Oldham & Hackman measure the job satisfaction in their original survey and are “ (a) job security, (b) pay and other compensation, (c) peers and co-workers ("social" satisfaction), (d) supervision, and (e) opportunity for personal growth and development on the job ("growth" satisfaction)” (p.162). The work outcomes benefiting the employer are higher quality work performance, low absenteeism and turnover rates. Combined, the four outcomes within the job satisfaction model are; high internal motivation, high work satisfaction, high quality performance, and low absenteeism and turnover (Oldham & Hackman 1975).

The job characteristics model's outcome job satisfaction covers topics such as job security and pay connecting to decent work in the terms of fair wage and work security. The job characteristics model would however, be most in line with the personal development which mention job satisfaction as an important component. Job satisfaction is also what the job characteristics model is evaluating by determining core characteristics that can be used to find areas of improvement within a workplace. The model could also provide a tool for explaining employee turnover trends, relating to work security, mentioned as an outcome from the core characteristics.

### *2.1.4 Critical perspectives on job characteristics model*

A criticism for this model would be that it is not applicable on all individuals. The Autonomy characteristic, for example, could appear anxiety arousing for someone who is not comfortable with responsibility, instead of motivating which is intended. Oldham and Hackman (1975) state that this model would be more accurate on individuals who highly value personal growth and feelings of accomplishment within their work environment and acknowledge this liability as moderators (Oldham & Hackman 1975) as seen in figure 1 (AIHR n.d.). Although many studies have proven to support the job characteristics model (Ali et al. 2013; Coelho & Augusto 2010; Price & Mueller 1986), there are opposing views. O'Brien (1982) states that core characteristics correlation to job satisfaction and intrinsic motivation is weak and that the moderating effect that Oldman & Hackman speak of is overstated. He also mentions that there is one factor which the core job characteristics are lacking, and that is the skill-utilization in the work environment (O'Brien 1982).

## 2.2 Herzberg's Two Factor Theory

Herzberg et al. (2007) describe how and why the two factor theory was founded. The theory originates from 1959 when the study *The Motivations to work* was released. The study revealed that worker satisfaction comes from achievement and growth in the quality of the work. The goal with the job attitudes study was to find an answer to what workers want from their jobs. Herzberg et al. (2007), describe how they saw the problem with earlier research and came up with the idea that job satisfaction and dissatisfaction could be measured on the same rating scale. The study showed that people are dissatisfied by bad environments but seldom become satisfied by good environments. The factors affecting the environment are referred to as *hygiene factors*. Factors called *motivators* are needed in order to become satisfied, which is described as intrinsic factors, including what the workers do. Herzberg et al. (2007) explain how the theory has been applied and adapted for many different working environments by users and researchers but that the core in the theory has remained unchanged since 1959. This thesis application of Herzberg's theory builds on the original version from 1959 although some other sources have been added in order to expand and clarify the theory.

### *2.2.1 Motivators and hygiene factors*

Herzberg's two factor theory builds on motivators and hygiene factors that affect how employees perceive their working situation and environment (Alshmemri et al 2017).

Alshmemri et al. (2017) describes how motivators are important in order to reach job satisfaction while hygiene factors are important in order to avoid dissatisfaction. Motivators are intrinsic factors that affect how people feel for their work and work tasks. On the contrary are the hygiene factors extrinsic and needed in order to fulfill the basic needs and by extension make the employees able to reach the motivators. Alshmemri et al. (2017) continue to explain that the hygiene factors are fulfilled when the employee is pleased with the situation, for example employees have a tendency to always seek higher wage but a higher wage than necessary will not result in job satisfaction but a too low wage will on the other hand result in dissatisfaction. How and when the factors are fulfilled are with other words subjective and are varying between individuals.

Bohm (2012) states that, satisfaction and dissatisfaction are not two opposites. Removing the causes of dissatisfaction will not create satisfaction; the hygiene factors and motivators are resulting in different outcomes which results in a need to fulfill all factors in order to reach satisfaction. Bohm (2012) mentions one example where bad company policies (hygiene factor) in the workplace will prevent an employee from reaching satisfaction even if they would obtain more responsibility (motivator). Job satisfaction is an environment and state of mind where employees feel good. High satisfaction results in motivation which makes this theory important for managers and company leaders due to the importance of motivation among the workers in order to create an effective environment with high performance employees (Bohm 2012).

The motivator factors are associated with the need for growth and self actualization including, advancement, achievement, recognition, responsibility, possibility for growth and the work itself that leads to positive job attitudes (described in Table 1) (Alshmemri et al. 2017). The hygiene factors include, company policies and administration, relationships with supervisors, salary, interpersonal relationships and working conditions (described in Table 2) (Alshmemri et al. 2017).



Table 1

*Explanation of Herzberg's motivators.*

Motivators	Explanation
Advancement	Implicates the upward, positive status/position of employees in the workplace.
Achievement	It can be to finish a difficult task or solve a problem, something that makes the worker see a positive result from the work done.
Recognition	Involves reward or praise for reaching goals or for doing high quality work.
Responsibility	Includes freedom to make decisions and authority.
Possibility for growth	Possibilities for employees to experience personal growth and promotion, chances to learn new skills and training.
The work itself	The work itself can be easy, difficult, interesting and boring, the work tasks can bring a positive or negative affect on employees.

(Source: Alshmemri et al. 2017)

Table 2

*Explanation of Herzberg's hygiene factors.*

Hygiene factors	Explanation
Company policies and administration	Management policies and guidelines, the delegation of authority and communication.
Relationships with supervisors	The competence and fairness from supervisors, delegation of authority, the ability to teach and job knowledge.
Salary	All forms of compensation for the work.
Interpersonal relationships	Includes both job related interactions and social discussions between workers, worker and supervisor, peers and subordinates.
Working conditions	The physical surroundings, the facilities, temperature, ventilation, space, tools and safety.

(Source: Alshmemri et al. 2017)

### *2.2.2 Critical perspectives on Herzberg's two factor theory*

The most groundbreaking result from *The Motivations to work*, was that it showed how behavior and performance lead to satisfaction and positive attitudes when the common assumption was that attitudes lead to behavior (Herzberg et al. 2007). This is also one of the criticisms expressed by House and Wigor (1967), Herzberg's study did differ from previous studies which can question their validity. Herzberg et al. (2007), do also describe that the study was conducted on accountants and engineers but when Herzberg started to extend his framework, he realized that they missed one factor, the client relationship. It showed that service jobs had client relationships as one of the most important sources for satisfaction. It would therefore be beneficial to conduct the study on more professions (House and Wigdor 1967). Herzberg et al. (2007) describe the theory as useful based on the fact that the theory has stimulated a large amount of research, it has offered useful applications and tools such as flextime and cafeteria benefits and the theory uses two dynamics and not two factors. House and Wigdor (1967) agree with Herzberg et al. (2007), that it is a useful theory that has been the base for management training and motivation programs for employees, but they do also have other criticism against the theory. The questions were in some cases asked with few answer options that leave the respondent to make its own interpretations and they are missing a measure of the "overall satisfaction".

### *2.2.3 Herzberg's theory's connections to SDG 8.5*

The two factor theory has similarities with the job characteristics model. They are both used in HR strategies in order to create a high performance workforce through job satisfaction. They are also mentioning the same factors, for example, that the employees should feel that they are contributing to the company's results, they should receive feedback and have freedom to make decisions. The two factor theory was developed before the job characteristics model and has not an equally developed framework, where the job characteristics model is to a wider extent telling the reader how to treat employees in order to receive special outcomes. The two factor theory is on the other hand explaining which factors that are leading to job satisfaction and which factors that leads to dissatisfaction. The theory is evaluating organizational problems from another angle and states that it is not only the working environment that is important.

The two factor theory describes the outcomes from how employees are treated. It describes how and why employees should be treated according to selected factors. Fair wage could be connected to salary, one of the hygiene factors. Work security includes both company policies and administration and working conditions that are hygiene factors but also well being at the workplace which can be connected to the motivators. Personal development is the aspect that can be most related to the motivators. Learning and continuous improvement can connect to the factor possibility for growth, while opportunities for promotion and career development can connect to advancement and recognition. We will, with help of the theory, be able to analyze how tourism companies are contributing to decent work in terms of employees' job satisfaction and the consequences of their work.

## 2.3 The Choice and Application of Theory

When looking for relevant frameworks in relation to SDG 8.5 and specifically for the term ‘decent work’, Sustainable Human Resource Management (SHRM) came to mind.

Traditional HRM frameworks and models have focused on value creation for firms as opposed to employees where sustainable HRM is an addition to the traditional HRM where not only financial outcomes are presented but also human, and contribute to “job satisfaction, engagement and positive psychological contract” (Kramar, 2014, p. 1076). Sustainable HRM could therefore be a beneficial framework when evaluating decent work as it considers the workers benefits. Job satisfaction model by Oldham & Hackman (1975) focuses on improving work performance benefiting the company in addition to job satisfaction benefitting the employees and could be a contributing model. The job satisfaction model has also proven to be scientifically relevant as significant relationships exist between the core job characteristics and the outcome of job satisfaction (Ali et al. 2013). Similarly, Herzberg’s two factor theory takes into account the employers satisfaction, or motivators, as a key factor for optimal HR strategy (Herzberg et al. 2007). Additionally the motivators and hygiene factors could contribute to evaluating decent work among abroad and local workers. The two theories will together create a more realistic answer to our research question and a more nuanced analysis where more aspects are taken into consideration and factors are weighted against each other.

In this thesis we will look at three components of decent work; fair wage, work security and personal development. These three terms within decent work have been defined in this thesis

by the help of dissertations, studies and an organization which focus on decent work applied to the tourism or hospitality sector. From the decent work definition criterias have each been constructed for each term, as seen in Figure 2. This framework will then be used in the analysis in combination with the job characteristics model and the two factor theory. The theories will be applied to evaluate the criterias presented in the framework in Figure 2 and thereby answer our research question on how tourism employers comply with decent work for abroad and local workers. Job characteristics model will mainly be used when evaluating personal development but also provide insights in work security and fair wage. Each characteristic will be discussed and compared to provide a perspective on how well job satisfaction is maintained. The turnover outcome in the model will also be relevant for work security where secure arrangements is a key component.

Herzberg's two factor theory will be used in this thesis to bring a perspective on work security, personal development and fair wage. Work security centers around the employee's safety against occupational hazards, disease in addition to the workplace contributing to all around well being. Contracts should also exist and be permanent to provide holidays and sick leave. The hygiene factors within Herzberg's model would be applicable for work security as working conditions and company policies are key components within the hygiene factors. Herzberg's model will be applied on the empirical data in the analysis to bring a perspective on whether the employees' basic needs are met. Fair wage is also applicable for the model as pay is mentioned as a hygiene factor. The model can bring insight for employees behaviors and overall satisfaction determined by how well the hygiene and motivator factors are upheld. Personal development can also clearly be linked to the motivator factors and will be used to evaluate how that specific criteria is upheld within personal development. Figure 2 illustrates how Herzberg's two factor theory and Oldham and Hackman's job characteristics model will be applied to discuss the criterias for fair wage, work security and personal development.

Fair Wage	Work security	Personal development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Account for cost of living</li> <li>● Account for participation in society</li> <li>● Fair in relation to similar jobs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Promote well being</li> <li>● Security for health and safety</li> <li>● Contracts that are permanent and secure</li> <li>● Security against dismissals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Opportunities for career progression</li> <li>● Skill development (learning and using skills)</li> <li>● Job satisfaction</li> <li>● Sense of meaning within work</li> </ul>

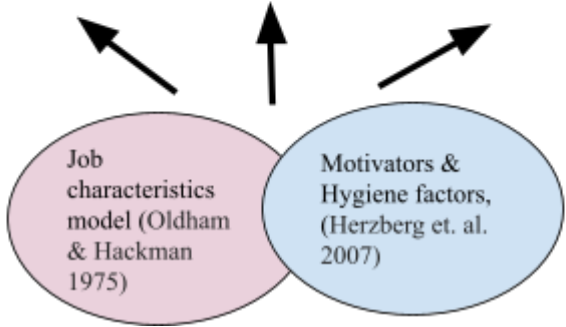


Figure 2: How theories will be applied on SDG target 8.5 decent work in terms of fair wage, work security and personal development. (Authors' own compilation)

## 3 METHOD

### 3.1 Research Approach

The first step we considered when identifying the most suitable method for this thesis was the research approach. We selected the abductive approach due to its relation to theory and data. Patel and Davidson (2017) describe the abductive research approach as a combination of the inductive and deductive. The first step is characterized by an inductive approach where a preliminary theory is formulated from individual cases. The theory is then continued to be tested on further cases. The last step is characterized by an abductive approach where the theory section is developed and complemented when more information has been gathered.

As mentioned, this is a research field where extensive studies have been conducted but not in the exact area that we are interested in. A Google Scholar search on the keywords “tourism industry SDG 8” resulted in a large amount of articles and studies. We could from these sources present a general picture of how tourism companies treat their local workers within different arrangements and working conditions. We could, however, not find any information on the difference between abroad and local workers in this field which required us to work flexibly. Our research was guided by the job characteristics model which we believed would suit our subject and research question but we were at the same time open to adding and further developing the theory section with consideration to the information generated from our empirical data.

It is common to use an abductive approach when theories are local and when they have a smaller reach (Patel & Davidson 2017) which the job characteristics model has. Patel and Davidson (2017) state one advantage of this method as being more open to new information and developments in the theory section, but mentions the disadvantage of unconsciously choosing a theory that will exclude other interpretations. This in turn could lead to our theory being automatically verified in the deductive step. The abductive approach did, however, give us flexibility to develop and receive a deeper understanding of our empirical data through the possibility to move between theory and research. It facilitated for us to respond to feedback and it did also result in a development of the theory section with one more theory, Herzberg's two factor theory.

## 3.2 Study Design

We used a qualitative method by conducting interviews with employees working for European tourism firms active in the Swedish market. The qualitative method allowed us to gather individual experiences in its context from our respondents, which provided us with relevant answers to our research question. A quantitative approach would have limited a deeper understanding of our research question by not taking the employees' individual contexts and experiences into account (Quinlan 2011). We would argue that it in our case was beneficial to conduct interviews with both managers and other workers in the company in order to achieve two dimensions and perspectives on how tourism firms are complying with decent work. We believe that a more fair and realistic picture of reality is shown through interviews with employees on different levels in the company due to their possible different views on social sustainability work. It motivated the inclusion of HR managers together with abroad and local workers for the interviews. Employees of all ages and genders have also been included on equal terms in relation to decent work to fully abide target 8.5.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted where an interview guide, attached in appendix, contained a list of questions prepared in advance. The interview questions centered around how the tourism company complies with SDG 8.5, decent work, in terms of personal development, fair wages and work security. Bell et al. (2019), describe that a semi structured interview leaves the interviewee with space to answer freely and that questions do not need to follow the way outlined. It also gives the interviewee a possibility to reach high interaction with the respondents (Quinlan 2011). By using a qualitative method with an semi-structured interview approach we were able to ask follow-up questions to obtain a better understanding of employees experiences in its context. Theories and frameworks provided in the theory section, were then applied to evaluate how and if the companies are maintaining SDG 8.5 and which impact their work has on employees.

## 3.3 Sampling

Purposive sampling was chosen for this thesis. Bell et al. (2019), describe purposive sampling as a method where participants are carefully selected in a strategic way in order to be relevant for the research question. Bell et al. (2019) also describe that it often is an advantage to have a variety in the sample through sample members with different characteristics. There are

several purposive sampling approaches presented and described by Bell et al. (2019). The sampling methods that were most in line with our investigation are maximum variation sampling and criterion sampling. Maximum variation sampling ensured a wide variation in terms of different employees working at a company while criterion sampling was applicable in the sense that all employees with knowledge about Human Resources, and employees with personal experience within our subject, were interesting for our research. The second method under the purposive sampling is snowball sampling which is described as commonly preceded by another sampling method. Bell et al. (2019), explain that snowball sampling means that the researcher is using initial contacts in order to reach out to and establish contacts with other interesting participants. We went through customer care and managers in order to reach out to abroad workers and one employee could give us contact details to other employees.

Bell et al. (2019), continue to describe the importance of sample size while also acknowledging the difficulties of knowing how many people that should be interviewed in order to reach theoretical saturation. The criteria for establishing whether saturation has been achieved are not clear, but a rule of thumb is that the more comparisons between groups and variables that are permored, the more interviews are needed. We conducted as many interviews as possible within our timeframe and collaboration possibilities from companies, resulting in 16 respondents (presented in Table 3). It was important for us to consider who our respondents were in order to be able to draw conclusions.

### 3.4 Respondents

We had from the beginning, six European tourism companies that we were interested in. We started to contact these companies early in the process through their customer care (chat on websites, telephone numbers and email addresses). We received contact with two HR managers from two different companies who said yes to participate in our study. One of the HR managers could provide us with contact information to a manager for abroad workers. We received contact with three abroad workers and one local worker through that contact. We contacted the rest of the respondents (six abroad workers) through a facebook group for abroad workers in Greece. All abroad workers have been working seasons between 2019-2021. The local workers (four) were contacted through email to hotels that at least one of the companies provided travels to. All interviews were conducted through digital meetings,



three interviews were group interviews but the rest of them were individual interviews. All interviews were recorded and transcribed in order for us to facilitate a validated result. We have a total of 16 respondents from four companies and the respondents are working at five different hotels. All respondents are presented in Table 3, in the beginning of the empirical data section.

It is preferred to conduct physical interviews, face-to-face in order for the interviewees to observe body language and the respondents mood at the same time as trust more easily is created (Quinlan 2011). All interviews were conducted as digital meetings where we had the possibility to see our respondents which gave us these advantages to some extent. We conducted both individual and group interviews which have different characteristics. Morgan (1993) describes that group interviews often are both time and money efficient but that the group dynamic has a big impact. The shared understanding in a group can make the researcher miss the individual variation. Morgan (1993) also explains that respondents can affect each other and their perceptions can change. We have been aware of these possible problems with group interviews but to reach out to as many respondents as possible within our timeframe and collaboration possibilities were more important. The group interviews included respondents that already knew each other, which we would argue, should bring less negative effects.

Interviews with abroad workers and HR managers were conducted through Swedish while interviews with local workers were conducted through English. Interviews conducted in Swedish have been translated to English in order to provide the empirical section with quotations. The language used in interviews has not been difficult in combination with few complicated terms and concepts which have facilitated our translation work. We have also worked together in a consistent manner in order to avoid misinterpretations and wrong translations.

Table 3

*All respondents categorized.*

Respondent:	Profession (age):	Interview Format:	Hotell, employed in:	Charter company:	Country:	Date of Interview:	Interview Language
Abroad Workers							
1	Bartender (23)	Personal interview	Hotell 1 (Charter)	Charter company 1	Cyprus	19-04-2022	Swedish
2	Swim instructor (19)	Group Interview 1	Hotell 1 (Charter)	Charter company 1	Cyprus	22-04-2022	Swedish
3	Gym instructor (24)	Group Interview 1	Hotell 1 (Charter)	Charter company 1	Cyprus	22-04-2022	Swedish
4	Tour guide (21)	Personal interview	Hotell 2 (Charter)	Charter company 1	Greece	22-04-2022	Swedish
5	Kids club (20)	Personal interview	Hotell 2 (Charter)	Charter company 1	Greece	24-04-2022	Swedish
6	Bartender (27)	Personal interview	Hotell 2 (Charter)	Charter company 1	Greece	27-04-2022	Swedish
7	Swim instructor (19)	Personal interview	Hotell 3 (Charter)	Charter company 2	Greece	03-05-2022	Swedish
8	Tour guide (23)	Group Interview 2	Hotell 4 (Charter)	Charter company 3	Greece	27-04-2022	Swedish
9	Tour guide (20)	Group Interview 2	Hotell 4 (Charter)	Charter company 3	Greece	27-04-2022	Swedish
Local Workers							
10	Chef (47)	Personal interview	Hotell 5 (local)	Charter company 1	Greece	02-05-2022	English
11	Waiter (21)	Personal interview	Hotell 1 (Charter)	Charter company 1	Cyprus	02-05-2022	English
12	Receptionist (38)	Personal interview	Hotell 5 (local)	Charter company 1	Greece	02-05-2022	English
13	Cleaner (52)	Group Interview 3	Hotell 5 (local)	Charter company 4	Greece	04-05-2022	English
14	Cleaner (50)	Group Interview 3	Hotell 5 (local)	Charter company 4	Greece	04-05-2022	English

HR - Managers							
15	HR-manager	Personal interview	-	Charter company 1	Sweden	12-04-2022	Swedish
16	HR-manager	Personal interview	-	Charter company 4	Sweden	04-05-2022	Swedish

(Authors' own compilation)

### 3.5 Research Strategy and Analysis Method

The process was initially started by formulating a general research question containing the area of research and the problem we seek to investigate. The second step became reading relevant studies and articles in order to receive a deeper understanding of the problem and subject. We then continued the research process by identifying relevant theories and contacting relevant companies. Participants were selected and an interview guide was conducted. The collection of our empirical data was the following step. Here we also compared the data with our chosen theory and evaluated if development was needed when we interpreted the data. Small adjustments were made throughout the thesis and the area was narrowed in order for us to write our final conclusion.

The last part of the thesis consists of an analysis between the empirical findings, the theories and our interpretations. An interplay between the collection of data and analysis was used in order to perform the analysis section which according to Bell et al. (2019), is common to use when having an abductive and qualitative approach. The analysis method, mostly related to our thesis, is thematic analysis. Bell et al. (2019), describe thematic analysis as a method with few rules but that it includes finding a theme through for example, looking for repetitions, metaphors, transitions and similarities and differences. The thematic method gave us a flexible approach where we have been looking for repetitions in order to establish a pattern but also at similarities and differences between our abroad and local workers. We have used our theoretical framework presented in Figure 2 in order to establish which material was relevant for our empirical section and as a framework for how the analysis should be conducted.

### 3.6 Secondary Data Collection

We have used online databases in order to gather relevant articles and previous research to our study. Online databases are the most valuable by being an extensive source of academic articles often providing easy access to full articles, according to Bell et al. (2019). The most used online database in our gathering of sources has been Google Scholar because of the variety and wide range of articles it offers. Another online database used is the service “super search” through the library of University of Gothenburg. Bell et al. (2019), explain the importance of paying attention to the trustworthiness of articles, especially from search engines such as Google Scholar which do not evaluate the articles credibility. Sources should therefore be critically evaluated in order to be useful and legitimate. Bell et al. (2019) further recommend readers to carefully evaluate the credibility of the author in terms of motivation and the institutional location of the website. A source should be trustworthy, knowledgeable and relevant for our research question which we will fulfill through a critical reflection of each source used.

### 3.7 Quality of the Study

Reliability and acting ethically is important in order to avoid harm and mistrust in the society, where research is an important part (Quinlan 2011). To achieve reliability we have clearly been defining concepts and provided full transparency in our interviews through recordings, research notes and the use of quotations from the respondents in the empirical section. Bell et al. (2019) mention how reliability is an important aspect due to re-creation of the research. We have considered stability when conducting our interviews in order for enabling this method to be recreated with similar results. Due to the use of a qualitative method this thesis will, however, lack standardization.

We have been working together in a consistent manner with transcripts, translations, analysis and categorization of our empirical data in order to reach inter-observer consistency (internal reliability), which Bell et al. (2019) state as important. Bell et al. (2019) also state that validity is a variable which describes and measures to what extent research findings are accurate and if it captures what is intended. We have been working for internal validity by using a suitable theory for our study and adapting the theory to our observations. As

discussed above, external validity and generalization can be reached through the participation of many respondents or through a conscious selection of our respondents.

### 3.8 Research Ethics

The Swedish Research Council (2017) has developed general recommendations and rules regarding research ethics that should be followed when conducting an investigation. One of the most critical parts in research ethics described by the Swedish Research Council (2017), is how participants in research are treated. They present the legislations that are available in the ethics area and one example is the Act, published 2004 with the aim to protect people involved in the research and ensure respect for human dignity. We informed our respondents that they were anonymous due to the characteristics of our question where some information can be perceived as sensitive. Their personal data and contact details have been carefully treated and not shared in this thesis. All respondents have been informed about our purpose with this thesis and how their answers will be used. All interviews have been recorded with the respondents permissions and deleted when the transcriptions have been conducted. All respondents have had the option to, whenever they wanted to, end the interview and to drop out of our investigation. We have treated their words carefully, through follow-up questions if there was something we did not understand and implemented quotations from the respondents in order to give an accurate retelling and summary in the empirical section.

The Swedish Research Council (2017) also describes an important set of principles named CUDOS, (communism, universalism, disinterestedness, organized skepticism), formulated by the sociologist Robert Merton. We have been working with these principles through a fair evaluation of previous research, that no other motives than to gain knowledge are driving us, and that we have questioned our assessment and evidence. The Swedish Research Council (2017) also discusses how these principles are hard to achieve in today's research and argues that many researchers are employed and loyal to organizations and superiors which can color the way they think and behave. This thesis is written for a bachelor program and is conducted by two students. We are therefore not included in a research community similar to professionals and our motives could be more extensive and divisive considering the aspect of personal interest but we have not been collaborating with other organizations or companies whose interest we need to take into consideration.

One discussion mentioned by the Swedish Research Council (2017) is the probability that certain ethical criteria can make it harder to conduct the research because it can result in longer time, higher costs and in some cases make it impossible to reach new knowledge. On the other hand are the quality of the study based on the external and internal validity and ethics, which means that research ethics is needed in order to reach quality in the research. The Swedish Research Council (2017) does also give examples of how poor research ethics is looking; incorrect methods, no precision in the questions, excluding observations that do not support the researcher's hypothesis and study designs that prevent the research question from being answered. We have carefully read how different methods can and should be conducted in order to avoid this poor ethics.

We have been striving to present a study with high research ethics in both our study design, use of previous research and our empirical collection. The aim with our research is to present neutral, value free information with transparency and clarity in a systematic way. We have, in order to achieve that, critically reviewed the literature and sources and considered our choice of method. People participating in our research have been treated ethically and fairly. Transparency has been achieved by always showing our underlying arguments for our choices and by the use of literature and theories as support for our arguments. Our research has been organized throughout the whole process, with all data and material electronically saved and shared between us. We have also transparently described how we reached our conclusions and how the empirical study was conducted.

## 4 EMPIRICAL DATA

All respondents shown in Table 3 have been interviewed based on the interview guide presented in appendix. The empirical data is then presented with consideration to Figure 2 where relevant information gathered from the interviews is categorized according to the decent work terms of fair wage, work security and personal development.

### 4.1 Fair Wage

#### *4.1.1 HR manager*

There are two HR managers working at two different tourism companies, participating in the survey (respondent 15 and respondent 16). They both stated that the employees working for their tourism firms are from Sweden and from the countries where the tourist destinations are located. Each company has their own hotel-chains which employ abroad and local workers. The hotels the companies are collaborating with, have their own employees that are residents of that country, which in this thesis is named local workers. Respondent 16 stated that, “We have a mix of workers from both the nordic countries, working as abroad workers and workers from the country we operate in. The personality and skills are more important than where you come from but we believe that it is good to have a mix.” (Personal interview, 04-05-2022). The respondents were both very fast to state that they are providing many job opportunities to both local and Swedish people and that the majority of the personnel are seasonal workers. Neither of them saw it as a problem to have many seasonal workers, respondent 16 explained that many seasonal workers have been employed for many years in the company and pointed to their good education and start up programs as important for an effective start up period.

The respondents were asked about their code of conduct and their work with the Travelife, which they briefly mention on their websites as an organization providing sustainability certifications within tourism. Their response to that question was similar, both their own hotels and partnered hotels need to fulfill Travelife’s criteria and their own code of conduct which includes employees wages. Respondent 15 expressed, “We do not have any insights about who our contracted hotel employs but they need to fulfill fair employment contracts that we have stated in our code of conduct. They also need to meet the social responsibility

requirements from Travelife which is an internationally, industrial recognised organization creating sustainability programs and certifications” (Personal interview, 12-04-2022). None of the HR managers could describe in detail what their code of conduct included in terms of wages but respondent 15 stated that, “We have some fundamental principles of how our work is performed both in business ethics, working environment, employment contracts and human rights” (Personal interview, 12-04-2022). Both companies have extra codes of conducts that are aimed at suppliers with policies concerning: human rights, protection of children, wages and benefits, fair treatment, healthcare and security, work against corruption, gifts, conflicts, society and the environment. Respondent 16 explained that they have a policy that all of their suppliers need to have at least minimum wages or the industry wages with no illegal salary deduction allowed. The respondent did also mention that the working hours need to be within the industry's policies. Neither respondent 15 or respondent 16 were able to share an employment contract or employee survey with us.

Respondents 15 and 16 had no detailed knowledge about Travelife’s work, but recommended us to visit their website, that states that all hotels that are certified by Travelife, (which all of our participating hotels are) need to fulfill at least the majority of their 163 criteria, or all of them depending on the size of the hotel (Travelife, n.d-a). Examples of criteria related to fair wage are; “Do you give all new employees something in writing which contains all terms and conditions of employment, including pay, before they start work? Do you have evidence to show how you make sure that all employees understand these terms and conditions and understand how much they will be paid? Do you have evidence to show that all your employees are paid no less than the legal minimum wage?” (Travelife 2020). There are certain steps the hotels need to go through in order to maintain the certification (Travelife n.d-b). The first step for the hotels is to fill in a form where the hotel answers which criteria they fulfill. The next step is a control where personnel from Travelife visit the hotel. The auditor will need access to all areas in addition to interviewing the employees. The hotel will then in the next step receive a report with possible improvements. The certification will be obtained when all criteria are fulfilled and controlled and this process needs to be repeated every two years in order to maintain the certification (Travelife n.d-b).



#### *4.1.2 Abroad workers*

Nine abroad workers participated in the study (respondent 1-9). They had different kinds of working titles, for example bartender, tour guide and swim instructor. They were all residents in Sweden and working abroad during the tourism season. Their age varied from 19-27 years and their length of employment between 3-8 months. The reasons for applying to their job varied but many said it was in order to gain experience, because of the weather, meeting new people and that they had heard good things about this job. Respondent 4 (tour guide) expressed it in this way, “The weather, it is always vacation mode and I love to travel and meet new people” (Personal interview, 22-04-2022). Respondent 9 (tour guide) had a similar response, “I wanted to try something new and working abroad sounded fun with new friends and experiences, but not something I plan to do my whole life” (Group interview, 27-04-2022).

We asked the abroad workers if their wage covered their cost of living (rent, food) and additional entertainment (eating out, clothes, cinema). We received answers from all respondents that their cost of living was covered by their salary, but there were some (respondent 1, and 6-8) which stated that they could not afford additional entertainment while others said they could (respondent 2-5 and 9). Respondent 2 (swim instructor) expressed this, “I don’t pay rent, but my wage definitely covers going out! I spend a lot of money on parties and eating at restaurants whenever we have a day off” (Group interview, 22-04-2022). While respondent 7 (also a swim instructor) stated that: “Yes, it covers my cost of living, the company is paying half of my rent so I don’t have such high expenditure, but I haven’t so much money left for additional entertainment” (Personal interview, 03-05-2022). Overall the abroad workers were positive about their salary covering their cost of living and additional entertainment although little money was left to save.

The respondents were also asked whether their salary had been changed when working at their job and how that development had looked. All respondents except number 6 and 8, answered that their wage had been the same with no increase, but these respondents had only been working for one season. Respondent 6 stated, “It has been a little bit higher every year, but not so much” (Personal interview, 27-04-2022) and respondent 8, “I get an increase because I’ve worked multiple seasons” (Group interview 27-04-2022).

### *4.1.3 Local workers*

The last category of respondents is local workers (respondents 10-14). Their professions are chef (47 years), waiter (21 years), receptionist (38 years) and cleaner (52 and 50 years). They are all residents in the country they work in. The employment varies from full time to 6 months, where respondent 10 (chef) and respondent 12 (receptionist) are working full time. The reason why they applied to the job differs in some extent to the abroad workers due to the mention of money. Both respondents 13 and 14 (the cleaners) and respondent 11 (the waiter) answered that they applied to the job because they needed the money. Number 12 (the receptionist) answered, “Want to work in the hotel industry, many jobs in the sector and the receptionists have varied tasks and meetings and responsibility which fits me “ (Personal interview, 02-05-2022).

When the question regarding if their wage covered their cost of living and additional entertainment was asked, their answers did not differ much from the abroad workers but they expressed a bigger need for the money they earned. There were also bigger differences between professions. Respondent 13 expressed, “Cleaners wage is not as high as it should be, but the hotel can only afford so much. I have adjusted to it. It covers the basics but nothing fancy” (Group interview, 06-05-2022). Respondent 14, also a cleaner, expressed that, “Together with my husband’s it is covered but no, we don’t spend money on entertainment” (Group interview, 06-05-2022). Respondent 10, on the other hand, explained that, “Well I don’t go on holiday every week but the wage is good, cost of living is covered and my children have nice things” (Personal interview 02-05-2022). The local respondents were also asked about their wage development, with answers that to a certain extent differed from the abroad workers. Respondent 11 was the only one that did not experience an increase in the wage. Respondent 10 stated, “Well since I’m head chef my wage of course has increased, but not lately since covid and the hotel haven’t been doing so well” (Personal interview, 02-05-2022). Respondent 14, answered, “A little bit higher, but it is not so much more” (Group interview, 04-05-2022). A similar experience was expressed by respondent 12 who described how the wage had increased, which they are very grateful for, but that they would like to have a better wage development.

## 4.2 Work Security

### 4.2.1 HR manager

We asked the two HR managers from two different Swedish charter companies what their arrangements within employment looked like. Respondent 15 stated that “We have a large number of seasonal workers from Sweden working at our hotels, for example as managers, group leaders, swim instructors and tour guides but we also have locally employed workers, working in our restaurants, hotel services” (Personal interview, 12-04-2022). The respondent continued to explain that the details for the contracted hotels’ employees are not within their knowledge although the hotels need to follow fair employment contracts and requirements of third party certificate organization Travelife. Respondent 16 stated that they believed the majority of the employees at the hotels are seasonal workers “due to the nature of the job” (Personal interview, 04-05-2022) while respondent 15 was unsure but approximated that a fifth works full time and remaining were seasonally employed.

We continued to ask about employee turnover. Both respondents explained how the need for staff varies between seasons, respondent 15 also talked about how this is not a problem, “We are working with good working agreements and an environment for our seasonal workers that results in many seasonal workers that return for many years, they do also have the opportunity to develop in their career with us” (Personal interview, 12-04-2022). Further, respondent 15 expressed how the Swedish staff working abroad, generally, has a higher turnover rate although the respondent was hesitant to make that general statement. When asked what the reason for the different turnover rates could be, the answer was “...maybe it’s harder to work in another country that they are not familiar with” (Respondent 15, Personal interview, 12-04-2022).

When asked about their company’s code of conduct in relation to work security, respondent 16 explained that they have a specific code of conduct aimed at their partnered hotels with focus on strengthening human rights and said “The service we provide has the possibility to make a positive environmental and social impact, and our supplier code of conduct is one way we make sure our partnered hotels uphold this standard” (Personal interview, 04-05-2022). Respondent 15 explained that partnered hotels also have additional policies based on human rights and will be canceled if they violate any of the requirements.

In the interview we asked about what the respondents thought consequences were of their HR work. Respondent 15 talked about employees being happy in addition to customers receiving good service and how their HR departments are always evolving to improve, for example by collaborating with organizations like Travelife. Respondent 16 talked more about changing the tourist industry as a whole and how “when I first started there were some work and check ups on partnered hotels but nothing compared with today, we take human rights very seriously and are making sure our employees are working in humane conditions...it's the right thing to do and it is what will bring us success in the long run” (Personal interview, 04-05-2022).

#### *4.2.2 Abroad workers*

When asked under what arrangements the respondents worked, all nine were seasonally employed. The season's length did vary and ranged from 3-8 months. All nine respondents worked full time, 40 hours a week, except respondent 5 (Kids club) and 7 (Swim Instructor) who worked 80%. Both bartenders (respondents 1 and 6) worked evening shifts and the tour guides (respondents 4, 7 and 8) had varied working schedules but mainly day shifts although it depended on arrivals and departures. All abroad workers worked six days a week with one day off, overtime was also unusual for the majority although not nonexistent, especially for respondent 4 who is a tour guide and stated that a “Big part of my job is to help guests from and to the hotels and airport, so whenever a plane is delayed we need to be flexible and overtime happens” (Personal interview, 22-04-2022).

Most abroad workers were not worried about being dismissed where respondent 1 said “No I’m not really worried, as long as I perform my job correctly there won’t be any problems, maybe if I was late and just rude to customers they would fire me...it has happened but they deserved it, so as long as perform my tasks I’m not worried”(Personal interview, 19-04-2022). Respondents 5, 6 and 7 mentioned Covid as causes of worry, “It definitely could happen so a little worried I always am of course, I lost my last job because of covid when it started” (Respondent 6, Personal interview, 27-04-2022).

In the interview the respondents were asked about their work environment's safety against occupational hazards and diseases. The majority found their work environments safe where

respondent 2 pointed to good policies and guidelines. Respondents 1 and 6, both bartenders, expressed that violence and sexist comments could occur where respondent 1 stated “There are definitely some sexist comments from customers, some can be scary” (Personal interview, 19-04-2022). Others talked about covid restrictions and how some guests lacked in following them. Respondent 8, a tour guide, said “We have guidelines for covid but some guests just do not care” (Group interview, 27-04-2022) but did also express that she considered their work environment safe in the other aspects.

Further we asked if the respondents' mental well-being were affected by their work environment and if their work tasks caused them stress. Respondents 1 to 4 and 7 said they were not feeling stressed although respondent 4, a tour guide, stated that “the work could be stressful depending on the person, I like when stuff happens and get bored easily so this job fit me very well” (Personal interview, 22-04-2022). Respondents 8 and 9 are also tour guides and had a similar view as respondent 4, finding their work not stressful but could see how others might feel that way. Both also expressed how their well being was not impacted in a negative way from their work in any other aspects.

#### *4.2.3 Local workers*

The local workers were asked the same question regarding employee arrangements where respondent 10 (chef) and respondent 12 (receptionist) were the only ones working full time. Remaining three respondents (11, 13 and 14) were seasonally employed. All respondents were, however, working at least full time i.e. 40 hours per week during peak seasons. Respondent 10 (chef) stated that they could work up to 7 days a week during the busiest period with a day off every 8th or 10th day and that the hours could vary from week to week. For respondent 11 overtime hours was not unusual “I would probably stay extra hours to help in the kitchen maybe 3 days a week in the summer months” (Personal Interview, 02-02-2022). In the group interview with respondents 13 and 14 (cleaners) both expressed that overtime hours were necessary sometimes while respondent 12 (receptionist) stated that they took overtime hours when needed.

Respondents 13 and 14 expressed worry about being dismissed and said “A little worried because of the war in Ukraine, People get scared to travel and the hotel will have no guests, I could be dismissed if it got worse” (Respondent 13, Group Interview, 04-05-2022).

Respondent 12 was one of the interviewees who was not worried about being dismissed and when asked answered that “No, I like my job very much and I have worked here for a very long time” (Personal interview, 02-05-2022).

We also asked whether the local workers considered their work environment safe against disease and occupational hazards. The general response from all respondents was that the work environment was safe although respondent 13 did express that her work tasks worsened her back pain. Respondent 11 (waiter) brought attention to how serving guests can bring risk for covid 19 because of its nature in addition to stating that his workplace was safe in all other aspects. We continued to ask if their workplace brought any stress where respondent 13 (cleaner) said “It is very stressful, we have to clean a lot of rooms in a short time” (Group interview, 04-05-2022). Respondent 12 worked as a receptionist and expressed how the stress varies, where the days that many guests arrive and check out are very stressful but also expressed liking the job.

## 4.3 Personal Development

### *4.3.1 HR manager*

The HR managers were asked if there were any opportunity for career development in their travel destinations were both stated that there was, “Yes, we have for example employees that have started as tour guides on one of our destinations and then become a group leader of that destination and later on working with us here in our headquarter in Sweden” (Respondent 15, Personal interview, 12-04-2022). Respondent 16 had a similar answer saying that, “Yes, if you are good at what you are doing, we have many career opportunities and are always searching for new talents..... We have a talent program where enthusiastic and hard-working employees can participate” (Personal interview, 04-05-2022). Both respondents stated that they worked with feedback and development talks at their destinations but they could not provide any details of that process or answer how often they have development talks. Respondent 15, “I can not say exactly how often development talks are performed at our own hotels but at least once a year when we have salary negotiations and our employees can always turn to the responsible manager if they have questions or concerns” (Personal interview, 12-04-2022). Respondent 16, “Yes, most of our hotels have feedback meetings

with employees once a week. Partnering hotels have feedback according to Travelife instructions and our code of conduct, which can vary” (Personal interview, 04-05-2022).

The respondents were also asked how they work with variation in work tasks for employees at their destinations. They both found the question hard to answer, but respondent 15 explained that, “All of our staff are following our code of conduct that states that employees should have meaningful work tasks and they have the opportunity to develop and change their work tasks in consultation with the responsible manager. We are also working with meetings where our employees can see the whole picture and how their work is useful” (Personal interview, 12-04-2022). Respondent 16 described how they regularly collect feedback from employees and that variation in work tasks, never been a problem mentioned.

#### *4.3.2 Abroad workers*

In our interviews with the abroad workers we asked whether they have any opportunity for career progression and if they see themselves working there in one or five years. The majority answered that there are opportunities (respondents 1-4 and 8-9) although not for very high positions “I don’t really want to work here for more than this season but I probably could get a higher position if I wanted to but it wouldn’t be a very high I don’t think, not without education” (Respondent 2, Group interview, 22-04-2022). Respondent 6 (bartender) expressed that they saw themselves working in the same career in the future although perhaps not for the same employer “I might work here in 1 year -but I might as well be in another country or even back in Sweden, definitely not in five years” (Personal Interview, 27-04-2022). One of the tourist guides did however plan to make a career in their current place of work where respondent 8 explained how they planned to become an event planner while respondent 5 (kids club) expressed that there were no career opportunities they were aware of.

We continued to ask our respondents about their work tasks and if they have learned any new skills within their current job and/or received training. All respondents explained that they had received training were respondent 4 (tourist guide) stated that they had a two weeks training period before starting the job but “the skills are so specific for being a tourist guide, like how you make sure everyone finds their bus or what to do if someone doesn’t have a fff [fit for flight] report after visiting a hospital, so I wouldn’t say that the training will be any

help for future education and jobs” (Personal interview, 22-04-2022). Another view expressed was respondent 9 (tourist guide) who explained how all experiences in some ways can be used and their time working here have helped them improve their skills for customer service. Other respondents instead found that they did not learn any new skills since the tasks were simple (respondents 1, 2, 3 and 5) while respondent 6 (bartender) instead explained how the skills learned was already something they knew from previous experiences.

When asked if the respondents considered their tasks varied there was a mixed response. Respondents 2 and 5 said no, “of course it is a little varied but taking care of kids and having the same games and teaching the same classes every week makes it so that it feels like we do the same thing every day” (Respondent 5, Personal interview, 24-04-2022). Remaining respondents did consider their tasks to be varied where respondent 1 explained how bartending was only one task in addition to helping in the kitchen, cleaning and how talking to customers made every day slightly different. Respondent 1 did also consider that they finished their tasks from beginning to end and said “Well yes you build relationships with customers and take their order, make the drink for them...” (Personal interview, 19-04-2022). Other respondent who agreed 2, 4, 5, and 7 while remaining generally felt that their task was only one small part of the customer experience “I am involved in a few of many steps of the guests experience but I would not say that I’m the one that completes the task from the beginning to the end, I’m only there from the airport to hotel for most guests” (Respondent 9, Group interview, 27-04-2022). Respondent 3 (gym instructor) did not see the daily work to be a contribution to the company’s success “I am only responsible for the gym classes but I don’t consider that the most important for the business success, absolutely many guests like our classes but if I was sick or a class was canceled it wouldn’t have so much impact in comparison to maybe a chef or cleaner” (Group interview, 22-04-2022). Many other respondents felt similarly to respondent 3 (respondents 1, 2, 4, 5 and 7) while others expressed that their work and customer service would impact the brand of the company they represented (respondents 6, 8 and 9).

We continued to ask how much responsibility and freedom each respondent had. Many felt they had much responsibility to help and answer customers but that there were guidelines and rules to follow limiting their freedom (respondents 4, 5, 7, 8 and 9). Respondent 3 had an opposite view and expressed that “The gym classes do help me inspire people and we can be creative in our workout plans and give suggestions, but I wouldn’t say I have any big



responsibility for the gym classes, we hold them together” (Group interview, 22-04-2022). Respondent 1 said that they had some freedom by experimenting with drinks for customers who ask but that in general the freedom was limited. Regarding feedback all abroad workers received it although respondent 7 explained how it only happened once. The majority did however, explain that it was standard every month or week. Others also mentioned that working with customers gives you a lot of feedback directly from them “Our customers give us a lot of feedback, some people are very harsh and will scream at your face if you don’t refund them or do as they want but most people are polite and are very grateful which make you feel like you have done a good job ” (Respondent 8, Group interview, 27-04-2022).

### 4.3.3 Local workers

When we asked the local workers the same question regarding the opportunity for career progression four out of five respondents said no, “I am the main chef here already so no promotion opportunity but of course I see myself working here in the future for many years” (Respondent 10, Personal interview, 02-05-2022). Respondents 13 and 14 (cleaners) also said no in their group interview but expressed that this is what both see themselves doing for the rest of their lives. In contrast, respondent 11 said there were opportunities for being promoted at their current job but “I am not planning on staying here long, I am only saving for a university program” (Personal interview, 02-05-2022).

When asked if they had learned any new tasks in their job, respondent 14 stated that “When I first started my cleaning job they show what to do and mostly where things are. Tasks are common sense things I knew from before that my mom taught me” (Group interview, 04-05-2022). All other respondents were consistent in terms of no training teaching new skills, respondent 10 (chef) did state that they learned through experience and that their dad has taught them to cook. In the interview we continued to ask about the variation of their tasks where respondents 10 and 12 said yes while respondent 11 (waiter) partially agreed, “yes I do everything from serving food, helping in the kitchen, clean tables...I am where I’m needed so there is some variation yes” (Personal interview, 02-05-2022). Respondent 13 and 14 said no and stated that they do the same tasks every day which are cleaning hotel rooms, public areas and laundry.

The majority of the respondents did find that they finished their tasks from beginning to end, “Yes I clean the hotel room by myself and do laundry” (Group interview, 04-05-2022). Respondent 12 (receptionist) however, answered the same question as “I wouldn't say that, the guest will check in with me and ask me questions but then they go to the restaurant and the chef cooks their food, we all work together for our guests to enjoy their visit here” (Personal interview, 02-05-2022). Respondents 10, 11 and 14 expressed that they did see themselves finishing tasks from beginning to end although still acknowledging that the hotel service was not something they alone had responsibility for. Four out of five respondents expressed that they saw their work as a contribution to the hotel’s success. Respondents 13 and 14 (cleaners) stated how working as a cleaner is a very important job and that it needs to be done thoroughly while respondent 11, opposed to the others, expressed that they were not important and “they could easily find someone else to take my job” (Personal interview, 02-05-2022).

We continued to ask the local workers what responsibilities and freedoms they obtain from their occupation. Respondent 10 (chef) expressed that he has a lot, both from writing the menu and being in charge of the food while respondent 12 (receptionist) stated similarly that answering phone calls, helping guests and booking require you to take a lot of responsibility. Respondents 11, 13 and 14 did not feel they have responsibility within their job although respondent 13 did state that they had some freedom “work tasks are not something we chose, but I fold towels in swans and flower shape, every day which I have been very complemented by” (Group interview, 04-05-2022). The general response of local employees on whether they received feedback was that they did not (respondent 10, 12, 13 and 14). Respondent 14 (cleaner) expressed how they have never had any feedback on their work and did not feel it necessary as they perform their job well. Respondent 10 (chef) did state that although no feedback came from colleagues or higher ups, customers would often compliment his food. In our interview with respondent 11 (waiter) did however say that “The chef is often telling me what I can do better” (Personal interview, 02-05-2022).

## 5 ANALYSIS

The structure is made according to the framework presented in Figure 2. The analysis is thereby sectioned into the decent work terms fair wage, work security and personal development.

### 5.1 Fair Wage

To comply with the SDG target 8.5 surrounding decent work, having a fair wage is important. Salary, described as all compensation for work, is one of the hygiene factors in Herzberg's theory (Alshmemri et al. 2017). That means that wages are important for workers in order to avoid dissatisfaction. This matches the result from our empirical study where most of the local workers expressed dissatisfaction over their job situation due to the wage. All of them also agreed that their wage increase has been small and that they would like it to be higher. Herzberg et al. (2007) is clear that the wage should be fair in order to avoid dissatisfaction but a higher one than what is needed is not going to make the workers feel job satisfaction. For local employees, primarily low rank jobs such as cleaner and waiter, do not have fair wage as for them the wage did not cover the cost of living. This results in a lack of job satisfaction among the local workers because they will not be able to reach the effects of the motivators when one of their hygiene factors is not fulfilled. Herzberg's theory states that a higher wage with better wage increase should be implemented in order for employees to be able to create motivation and to a higher extent better results and more effective workers (Bohm 2012).

The local workers did in general also not spend much money on entertainment. Differences regarding this aspect could be related to occupations and rank within tourism as the chef did have money to buy nice gifts for their children while the cleaners had no money left over. Herzberg's hygiene factor, salary, could therefore be considered even less fulfilling for jobs such as cleaners and result in even higher dissatisfaction preventing any positive effects from motivators within the job. There is therefore some variation within local employees compliance to fair wage although in general they do not fulfill this criteria. Job characteristics model (Oldham & Hackman 1975) states how one of the specific job satisfaction measurements is *pay and other compensation*. Where local workers not receiving wages that are enough to participate in society would affect job satisfaction negatively, and even more so

when cost of living is not accounted for. Low wages will therefore bring negative consequences for other aspects other than struggling for money by worsening personal development and thereby compliance with decent work, as the terms partially overlap. The local workers had also not experienced an increase in their wage during recent years because of covid affecting business, but did state that there had been an increase before in relation to promotion. Local workers' wages seem therefore not to be accounting for inflation and lack in that aspect to fulfill fair wage, according to Civil Society Reflection Group (2018) which mentioned the importance of inflation when discussing SDG 8 implementation for minimum wages in the EU. In general local employees do not comply with decent work as wages for the majority do not account for the cost of living and entertainment, although some variation exists due to occupation and living situation.

In contrast, the abroad workers were more positive about their wage even though some expressed that they did not have enough money to afford any additional entertainment. These two groups of workers (local and abroad) can be hard to compare due to their different life situations. The abroad workers are overall pleased about their financial situation even though they have a low wage, which according to Herzberg et al. (2007) imply that they have a fair wage and that they will be more susceptible to the motivators. This difference in attitude could be explained by the abroad workers' young age and reasons for taking the job which included factors such as the weather and experience with little or no intention to continue this career path in the future. Wage could thereby be considered not as an important factor in comparison to local workers, and therefore make abroad workers more easily satisfied. It could also be the case that low wages instead affected abroad workers to not choose tourism jobs in the long run due to dissatisfaction. Herzberg's model (Bohm 2012) states how low salary will make the motivator of growth opportunities not be effective as the basic needs within the workplace (hygiene factors) are not covered. Salary not being covered will therefore lead to dissatisfaction within the job where any motivation received from further growth will be disregarded by the worker. To make tourism occupations more attractive as a career path, higher wages could therefore be an effective initiative. By fulfilling the hygiene factors job satisfaction can be fulfilled where motivators will provide a positive effect, both for the worker and employers to comply with decent work through fair wage and personal development.

Both HR managers state that they have fair wage both for their abroad and local workers even though they mention having outsourced parts of the control to Travelife. Travelife states how employees should be informed about their wage before starting and should receive all details in form of a contract in advance. The size of the wage should be no less than legal minimum wage which is also expressed by the two companies code of conducts. Herzberg's theory has another explanation for when the hygiene factor salary is fulfilled and it is not only the minimum wage that is needed, the focus is on the employees perception (Alshmemri et al. 2017). They need to feel that their wage is fair in order to avoid dissatisfaction. The HR managers did a good job balancing the abroad workers wage although their codes of conducts and Travelife's work has not been successful for the local workers resulting in low job satisfaction and low compliance to SDG 8.5 and decent work.

According to Herzberg's theory the tourism employers should therefore provide a fair wage not just considering the legal minimum wage but also the employees perception. It could be argued that the local employees, having on average more years of experience than abroad workers and higher expenses due to children, should obtain higher salaries. With abroad workers wages's accounting for cost of living and participation in society to a higher extent than local employee's wages, this is most likely not the case and might even point towards the opposite. Local employees might therefore see their wage as low, even if Travelife's requirements are met, and not fulfill the salary hygiene criteria preventing any job satisfaction according to Herzberg's model (Bohm 2012). As the model also states how job satisfaction will be prevented in addition to other benefits received from motivators, the low wage will not only affect fair wage but also personal development criterias to not be fulfilled. Compliance with decent work are therefore, in general, not fulfilled regarding fair wage and personal development for local workers. Abroad workers are more satisfied but could be refraining from long term careers within tourism due to low wages, in general fair wage could be considered fulfilled although decent work would still be negatively affected by low wages through lack of personal development and career opportunities.

## 5.2 Work Security

Work security is one of the three important factors within decent work to measure compliance with SDG 8.5. The workers' well being should not be negatively affected by their workplace (ILO Conventions n.d.) where the majority of abroad workers agreed it was not. Some

respondents did however state that their work tasks could be seen as stressful but were not for them personally. This could be interpreted as a limitation from the employer's side, if tasks are expected to be performed within a too short timeframe it can cause stress. With handling guests being referred to as the possibly stress inducing task, the respondents could also have alluded to how some individuals would find it stressful to deal with upset guests due to differences in personality rather than them tolerating unreasonably stressful work tasks. How employees perceive the situation is very important according to the job characteristics model (Oldman & Hackman 1975) which is also stated by Herzberg's theory (Alshmemri et al. 2017). Work tasks that are causing stress among employees due to bad company policies, a hygiene factor, which create dissatisfaction (Alshmemri et al. 2017). For abroad workers this is however not the case, the hygiene factor of company policies is instead fulfilled as all workers do not perceive their job as stressful for themselves. Fulfilling this hygiene factor helps avoid dissatisfaction and make motivators, related to personal development, available.

Although slight variation, well-being in the workplace is something abroad workers seem to have in general. Local workers, on the other hand, had varied responses with most saying they have trouble completing all their tasks during peak season. Employees that were affected negatively by stress can be a result from bad working conditions where few tools are used in order to avoid stress, when using Herzberg's theory. The respondents are working in different physical surroundings but they have in common that they are working in Greece or Cyprus. Many of the abroad workers mentioned that they seek the job due to the environment (warm weather and sunshine) which Herzberg's theory mentions as possible risk factors considering working conditions. The physical surroundings; the facilities, temperature, ventilation, space, tools and safety is an important hygiene factor (Alshmemri et al. 2017). Working conditions can therefore both provide security and promote well being. Working conditions are in this case promoting the abroad workers' well being while the local workers are negatively affected by stress caused by too little time to perform work tasks.

All abroad and local workers considered their workplace safe from occupational hazards where hotels probably can be seen as a low safety threat in that aspect despite the constant contact with customers that could cause unpleasant situations. Although there were some problems with people not following restrictions against covid for both abroad and local workers. With restrictions put in place to avoid transferring covid, guests were causing hazards by not following them. Employees should however still be protected where it is the

employers responsibility to not expose their workers to those situations (ILO Conventions n.d). A possible solution to this problem according to Herzberg's theory, is better policies which is one of the hygiene factors that should be fulfilled in order to create a good working environment. Many of the abroad workers pointed out that they have good company policies creating a good working environment but policies surrounding restrictions could in this case be stricter with the aim to protect employees. Relationships with supervisors and interpersonal relationships is another hygiene factor mentioned by Herzberg that could prevent occupational hazards (Alshmemri et al. 2017). Colleagues and meeting new people were mentioned by the abroad workers as one of the reasons many of them applied to the job which can be a contributory factor for their working environment.

It became clear that no abroad workers had full time employment which according to (Stuart et al. 2016) lowers work security even though seasonal contracts existed. Local workers, on the other hand, did have two out of five respondents who worked full time in terms of how many hours they worked per week. Both cleaners above the age of 50 were seasonal workers and did not plan to change career paths in the future. This kind of arrangement could therefore be considered more beneficial for the employers in terms of cost saving, but at the cost of the employees' work security. From the HR managers' interviews it became clear that these respondents reflected reality, where the majority working in tourist resorts are seasonally employed. They did not see seasonal employment as something negative due to the nature of the industry but it can be a cause of dissatisfaction among workers when using Herzberg's theory. Depending on the position, working overtime happened rarely for abroad workers but in contrast, local workers often had overtime hours during peak seasons. Working overtime often could also be considered taking advantage of the workers in this case specially local workers.

When asked about turnover rates one HR manager stated how it exists but is not a problem due to good work agreements and how opportunities for career development still exist. From the abroad workers' answers eight out of nine did not see themselves working in that job five years from now. The job characteristics model (Oldham & Hackman 1975) states how high turnover rates are an outcome of not fulfilling core job characteristics and critical psychological stages which includes factors such as feeling meaningfulness within the job and having the knowledge of the results. The model would therefore say that the high turnover rates tourism experience would be due to lacking in the critical psychological stages

and is also connected to factors such as job satisfaction and low absenteeism, i.e. personal outcomes benefiting the worker. From a perspective of SDG 8.5 decent work, permanent contracts are preferred where both abroad workers and local employees are lacking in fulfilling these aspects.

Important to mention would however also be the context which the respondents were living in. Although abroad workers had more seasonal employment, most did not apply for the job because of money but instead because of the experience and good weather. Some of the local workers had children to provide for where this occupation was their only career path, having worked there several decades and planning to continue in the future. Not having permanent employment could put them in a more vulnerable position with higher expenses, limited career options and children to take care of. Which means that our results are in line with ILO (n.d.) description about vulnerable groups in the tourism industry. Considering this aspect, employers of local workers are not upholding work security in ways that cause more serious consequences in comparison to abroad workers who generally wanted experience and did not plan to continue working in tourism for more than one year.

The HR managers declined giving out employee contracts, little information is thereby obtained on arrangements for dismissals. Abroad workers did however express that they were not worried about being dismissed as long as they performed their work tasks. The local workers expressed worry about being dismissed due to the war in Ukraine affecting tourists while others were not worried. Again, we need to pay attention to how the consequences for abroad workers being dismissed are low compared to the local workers due to their different situations. Worrying about dismissals can be a cause of bad company policies and contracts according to Herzberg's theory. The hygiene factor, company policies and administration can not be seen as fulfilled due to the problems with different aspects of work security mentioned by local workers especially. The majority of abroad workers have the mentioned hygiene factors fulfilled while the local workers are lacking some of them and are as a result suffering from dissatisfaction. The concern about dismissals and negative stress causes dissatisfaction and will, according to Herzberg's theory, create less motivation and inferior results among the local workers (Bohm 2012). The local workers have several hygiene factors that cause job dissatisfaction which will make it impossible for them to reach job satisfaction and motivation according to Herzberg's two factor theory, also affecting compliance with decent work through personal development negatively.



### 5.3 Personal Development

The last criteria of SDG target 8.5 decent work is personal development and involves several criteria that need to be fulfilled; there should be lifelong learning, professional development through new skills, opportunities for career progression and promotion (described in Figure 2). Another goal within personal development is to reach job satisfaction in addition to a sense of meaning within the job. Herzberg's motivators are clearly related to personal development and are needed in order to reach job satisfaction. The motivator *advancement*, implicates the upward, positive status/position of employees in the workplace (Alshmemri et al. 2017). Both HR managers stated that they have career opportunities for all employees at their travel destinations. Abroad workers saw some opportunities while the local workers expressed that almost none existed. Most of the abroad workers did however state that the career possibilities were limited to reach only one higher position and that the majority did not plan to continue working there for more than one season. Herzberg's theory would possibly see these two facts as related. With low career opportunities, from the employees perception, their job satisfaction will decrease and could thereby affect the attractiveness of the job in the long run. For the local workers the lack of career progression will negatively affect job satisfaction and make the employers not comply with decent work.

The two factor model (Herzberg et al. 2007) states how the motivator *advancement* will not prove effective if the hygiene factors are not upheld. With abroad workers lacking in salary, through low wages, and working conditions, through seasonal and non secure contracts, simply giving better career opportunities will not alone solve this problem. The model instead suggests that the reason for employees not planning a career in their workplace even though some career progression exists, is due to dissatisfaction from hygiene factors not being fulfilled. Reducing turnover in tourism for abroad workers could therefore be done by not only providing more career development opportunities but also, and most importantly, focus on good salary and working conditions to avoid dissatisfaction. Similarly fulfilling hygiene factors for local employees would provide a foundation for the personal development criteria such as career development, job satisfaction and meaning in the job, to be able to be fulfilled. The lack of complying to fair wage and work security will therefore hinder personal development to reach its potential for both abroad and local workers according to the two factor model.

Another important component of personal development, and decent work, is skill development, which caused mixed responses from our respondents. The HR managers talked about training-, talents programs and development talks that should be conducted at least once, during the season. The motivator *possibility for growth* relates to how employees should experience personal growth and promotion while given chances to learn new skills (Alshmemri et al. 2017). This motivator is closely related to the factor skill development. All abroad workers received training before starting their new job, where they learned new skills but the limitations within career progression made it hard for them to uphold this gain of personal growth. Some of them did also express that the work tasks are simple and repetitive which would allude to this criteria not being fulfilled as it needs to correspond with the employee's perception, and thereby negatively affecting job satisfaction. The motivator, possibility for growth is therefore partly available for abroad workers.

The local employees have an even harder time, learning new skills and receiving new experiences with no training and low career opportunities. Instead both cleaners and the chef expressed how they learned their skills from parents and people outside work. The local workers have also been working for a longer period than the abroad workers which give more opportunities for skill development although not having received any support from their managers such as, feedback, training and promotions. The motivator for growth is therefore partly available for abroad workers but not local workers. We would argue that both the motivator possibility for growth and skill development is not fulfilled for the local workers, who lack support.

Job satisfaction model (Oldman & Hackman 1975) states that the core characteristics of *task-variety*, *identity* and *significance* results in a sense of meaning in the work. A sense of meaning within one's work is also an important part of personal development. The workers were asked whether they finished the task from the beginning to the end and whether they felt that their work was important for the company's success. Their responses were different where local workers were more convinced about the importance of their work performance and did to a wider extent express that they performed their work task from the beginning to end. The abroad workers were in general not negative towards how their work tasks were designed but many did not see their contribution as important. The task identity for both respondent groups could therefore be seen as fulfilled and help contribute to a sense of meaning, according to the job characteristics model.

The reason for abroad workers not believing their contribution is important could be due to the fact that they spend less time working in their position. Local workers who spend years in their profession and have more experience in the field might know how the company is affected by their work. One abroad worker also stated that they did not consider their work a big contribution due to their job (gym instructor) and explained how a chef and cleaner would be more vital to the hotel. Local workers interviewed in this thesis are working as just cleaner and chef among other jobs, which could also be a potential reason for this difference. The perception of the abroad workers does also matter for whether they feel task significance as it relies on the employee believing and understanding that they contribute. Task significance would therefore not be considered fulfilled for abroad workers where either tasks need to be divided more between them and/or each role's importance be communicated more clearly. For the local workers this criteria was however fulfilled with all respondents feeling they finished their task from beginning to end.

Skill variety is the third core characteristic in the Oldham and Hackman's model which leads to finding meaning within one's work. Abroad workers had mixed responses on how much their tasks and skills varied. This could be due to tourism having a variety of different occupations which in turn have different work tasks and makes it hard to generalize. Among the local workers both cleaners expressed little variation in tasks while the receptionist had an opposite experience. In all, this core characteristic would be fulfilled for some abroad and local employees possibly related to occupation and even rank as cleaners did not fulfill this while the chef and receptionist did. The job characteristics model would suggest that more skill variety is needed for both groups of employees in order to gain a sense of meaning within the work, for abroad workers task significance would additionally need to be improved to gain this criteria and comply with decent work.

By not gaining the critical psychological state of *a sense of meaning within the work*, job satisfaction, in addition to low turnover, intrinsic motivation and high job performance, will not be achieved according to Oldham and Hackman's model. They further explain how two other psychological stages need to be fulfilled in order to reach job satisfaction which are *responsibility* and *knowledge of one's job performance*. These will in turn be achieved through core characteristics *autonomy* and *feedback*. Obtaining job satisfaction is also an important part of personal development and decent work to comply with SDG target 8.5.

Both abroad and local workers had some freedom although the abroad respondents generally had more guidelines to follow. The local workers' variation could also be due to rank in occupation as the chef would buy supplies and make changes in the menu while the waiter and cleaners had set tasks with little to say about it. The level of freedom also varied among those who said yes as the chef (local worker) had power to decide many aspects while a bartender (abroad worker) said they felt freedom when experimenting with drinks on a customer's request. Considering the context of how the chef had many years of experience while many abroad workers are new to their job, this might also be a reasonable difference. Majority of abroad workers' experience some independence and freedom fulfilling the autonomy criteria while others did not and therefore could improve to achieve job satisfaction according to the job characteristics model. For local workers the autonomy criteria was therefore partially fulfilled as it varied between occupations and rank.

The last core characteristic is feedback. For this characteristic clear differences existed between local and abroad workers. Most abroad workers had monthly or weekly meetings with team leaders. All local workers except one expressed how they did not have meetings or any regular feedback from colleagues. Although no feedback internally, local workers did receive it from customers where both the chef and receptionist said this was a weekly occurrence. The abroad workers agreed in this aspect stating that customers were not afraid to voice their opinions, good and bad. In all, the feedback criteria is fulfilled for abroad workers and partially for local employees, although only from customers. According to the job characteristics model (Oldman & Hackman 1975), all three critical stages need to be fulfilled in order to gain the outcome of job satisfaction along with other outcomes benefitting the employee and employers. With several core characteristics lacking for both abroad and local workers, as seen in Figure 3, the employees would not have gained this outcome, or at least not reached up to its potential and have areas of improvement.

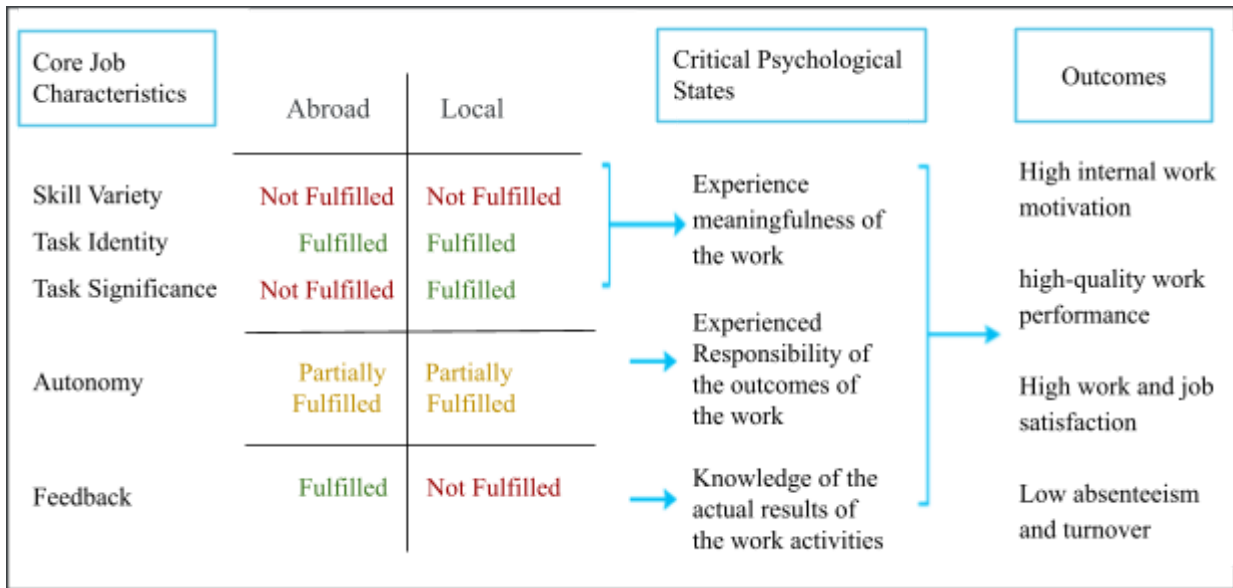


Figure 3: Abroad and local workers' compliance to the job characteristics model. (Authors' own compilation.)

Herzberg et al. (2007) state how employees can achieve job satisfaction through the two factor theory. According to this model the hygiene factors need to be fulfilled in order to reach the positive effect obtained by the motivators. As discussed in previous sections, and illustrated in Figure 4, this is not the case for local workers. The lack of fulfilling basic needs will both prevent job satisfaction and instead lead to dissatisfaction for the employee. The abroad workers had some variation in their answers where two hygiene factors could be seen as partially fulfilled and therefore could make them susceptible for job satisfaction according to Herzberg's model.

A motivator not previously discussed is *achievement*, which can be to finish a difficult task or solve a problem, something that makes the worker see a positive result from the work done (Alshmemri et al. 2017). As mentioned previously, local workers felt they contributed to the company's success while abroad workers' responses varied and fulfilled the hygiene factor accordingly. *Recognition* is the next motivator and involves reward or praise for reaching goals or for doing high quality work (Alshmemri et al. 2017). The HR managers did state how they were working with feedback and development, where the majority of abroad workers received feedback regularly but with no mention of any further reward or praise for good work. The local workers were lacking feedback in all forms and did not mention other rewards either.

*Responsibility* is the next motivator, freedom to make decisions and have control in the form

of authority (Alshmemri et al. 2017). From previous discussions we mentioned how the majority of abroad workers expressed that policies and guidelines limited their freedom while local workers, on the other hand, had a higher degree of responsibility but varied due to occupation and rank. The last motivator, *the work itself*, is described as a factor that can be easy, difficult, interesting and boring (Alshmemri et al. 2017). The work tasks can bring a positive or negative affect on employees. When the HR managers were asked about variation in work tasks, were their responses vague. Most of the abroad workers thought they had variation in work tasks while the local workers were more negative about their work tasks being the same every day.

In Figure 4 all hygiene factors and motivators related to the empirics are presented. All factors are not mentioned due to lack of data following when the theory was implemented after the collection of data. Interpersonal relationships for local workers are missing data and are therefore not evaluated in the figure. Responses were mixed within the working groups but a general trend has been identified. The motivators are important factors, as the only ones creating job satisfaction. They affect how people feel about their work and work tasks, where we in general can draw the conclusion that our abroad workers are more positive about their job compared to our local workers. Job satisfaction is an environment and state of mind where employees feel good and motivated (Bohm 2012). High satisfaction (availability of more motivators) results in high motivation where the workers strive for results together in the company (Bohm 2012). One of the HR managers did mention this as a consequence from their HR work, good and accurate HR work, results in happy employees, which in turn results in better customer service. The HR managers should, according to Herzberg's theory, continue with their work and improve it in order to reach more of the motivators. The local workers need to get their basic needs and expectations fulfilled through the hygiene factors in order to reduce their job dissatisfaction and be able to achieve motivation and satisfaction.

Hygiene Factors	Abroad Workers	Local Workers
- Company policies and administration	- Partially fulfilled	- Not fulfilled
- Salary	- Partially fulfilled	- Not fulfilled
- Interpersonal relationships	- Fulfilled	---
- Working conditions	- Fulfilled	- Fulfilled
Motivator Factors	Abroad Workers	Local Workers
- Advancement	- Not fulfilled	- Not fulfilled
- Achievement	- Not fulfilled	- Fulfilled
- Recognition	- Partially fulfilled	- Not fulfilled
- Responsibility	- Partially fulfilled	- Partially fulfilled
- Possibility for growth	- Partially fulfilled	- Not fulfilled
- The work itself	- Partially fulfilled	- Partially fulfilled

Figure 4: Abroad and local workers' compliance to the hygiene and motivator factors from Herzberg's two factor theory. (Authors' own compilation.)

## 5.4 Main Takeaways of Abroad and Local Workers Compliance to Decent Work

To comply with SDG 8.5 European tourism employers need to consider decent work. Decent work consists of many aspects where in this thesis we have chosen to focus on fair wage, work security and personal development. Although separated in the analysis, the terms overlap in many ways. Fair wage is mostly upheld for abroad workers but not for local workers, as illustrated in Figure 5. With this basic need not fulfilled the two factor theory (Herzberg et al. 2007) states how no motivator, related to the personal development term, can help reach job satisfaction. Instead the lack of fulfilling hygiene factors will lead to dissatisfaction. The same effect of dissatisfaction will be the result for not upholding several criterias in work security which both groups of respondents lack in. Local workers were however considered less fulfilling of work security as their living situation made them more vulnerable and dependent on their job in comparison to abroad workers. This is also highly reflected by the reasons for taking the job in addition to future plans of career path. Most abroad workers planned to only work one season with the experience viewed as more

important in contrast to local workers who prioritized wages and generally planned to stay in this career for many years.

With personal development so dependent on work security and fair wage only some abroad workers, and no local workers, would be able to gain job satisfaction according to Herzberg's theory. The job satisfaction model did however have a different take and stated how job satisfaction, and a meaning within the work, can be fulfilled through core job characteristics. All core characteristics need however be fulfilled in order to gain job satisfaction, which neither group of workers did. Figure 5 is based on general takeaways on previous analysis sections, summarizing abroad and local workers' compliance to decent work based on the framework in Figure 2. Answers from respondents of the same group of workers varied making it hard to draw general assumptions. For local workers this was mainly due to occupation and rank which created a trend within the answers. Local workers with jobs such as cleaner and waiter continuously had lower compliance to fair wage, work security and personal development than workers working as chef and receptionist. These variations caused some criterias being partially fulfilled while for abroad workers individual views were the main cause of not having a criteria clearly fulfilled or not. In general Figure 5 illustrates how abroad and local workers have many areas of improvement although abroad workers comply with decent work to a higher degree then local workers.



<b>Fair Wage</b>	<b>Abroad Workers</b>	<b>Local Workers</b>
- Account for cost of living	Fulfilled	Partially Fulfilled
- Account for participation in society	Partially Fulfilled	Partially Fulfilled
- Fair in relation to similar jobs	Fulfilled	Not Fulfilled
<b>Work Security</b>		
- Promote well being	Fulfilled	Not Fulfilled
- Security for health and safety	Fulfilled	Fulfilled
- Contracts that are permanent and secure	Not Fulfilled	Not Fulfilled
- Security against dismissals	Not Fulfilled	Not Fulfilled
<b>Personal Development</b>		
- Opportunities for career progression	Not Fulfilled	Not Fulfilled
- Skill development (learning and using skills)	Fulfilled	Not Fulfilled
- Sense of meaning within work	Not Fulfilled	Not Fulfilled
- Job satisfaction	Partially Fulfilled	Not Fulfilled

Figure 5: Summary of abroad workers and local workers compliance to the decent work criteria presented in Figure 2. (Authors' own compilation.)

# 6 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

## 6.1 Conclusion

The research question which this thesis aims to answer is “*How are European tourism firms complying to decent work in terms of fair wages, work security and personal development for abroad workers vs local workers?*”. From our empirical data and analysis we can conclude that European tourism firms are not complying to decent work for either abroad or local workers. Abroad workers lack work security through non permanent and secure contracts in addition to low security against dismissals. Local workers do not comply regarding the same reasons in addition to their workplace not promoting well being. Additionally, employers of local workers do not provide fair wages or any support for personal development. Abroad workers do generally receive fair wage but lack personal development by not feeling a sense of meaning within the work, job satisfaction and low career development opportunities.

UNs sustainability goals are, as previously described, developed with the aim to protect humanity and increase living standards (UN n.d.-b). The tourism industry is one of the most important employers when looking at the European labor market (UNWTO 2021) which makes their incentive to fulfill the criteria even stronger and more important. European tourism firms have the ability to impact many people’s working conditions and be in the forefront for social sustainability as a labor intensive sector. Satisfied and pleased employees have been shown to perform better customer experiences which also benefits the companies (Haghkhah et al. 2011). All criteria should with other words be fulfilled in order to care for employees rights and working conditions, and gain benefits for the company in addition to comply with UNs sustainability goal 8.5.

## 6.2 Recommendation

Herzberg's theory states that European tourism firms should at least fulfill all hygiene factors which the tourism employers are struggling to achieve (Alshmemri et al. 2017). The recommendation for European tourism firms would be to give a salary which satisfies the worker from their perception, this would be applied for both abroad and local workers. The second hygiene factor which can be improved for both worker groups is company policies and administration. This is specifically in reference to policies surrounding covid which

needed to be stricter to not put the employees in vulnerable positions. For local workers European tourism employers should additionally counteract stress by giving more time to do current tasks or split current tasks between more workers.

The motivators are the next step which Herzberg's theory states is needed to create job satisfaction and motivation among employees (Alshmemri et al. 2017). For both abroad and local workers more career opportunities should be given in addition to higher responsibility in their job. Herzberg's theory would also recommend providing more feedback for local workers in combination with reward and praise for both workers groups. Learning new skills in the workplace is another initiative European tourism employers would benefit from, by providing training for local workers and possibly changing tasks for abroad workers. Additionally the work itself needs to be perceived positively by abroad and local workers by making tasks more easy, challenging or interesting. Lastly, Herzberg's theory would recommend European tourism firms to improve achievement motivation among abroad workers by communicating the importance of their work performance or changing tasks.

To further comply with decent work, tourism employers should achieve a sense of meaning for their employees. According to the job characteristics model more variation of skills, tasks and talents are needed for both abroad and local workers to achieve this. Additionally abroad workers need a higher task significance, achieved through employers communicating the work performance contribution better or even changing tasks. In order for the workers to have job satisfaction, previously mentioned actions need to be taken in addition to local workers receiving feedback internally and both respondent group's being given more freedom in their work.

### 6.3 Limitations

Limitations for the conclusion which need to be addressed are that atypical answers can be given from abroad workers due to all of them being residents of Sweden. Cultural differences could possibly affect attitude and perceptions giving atypical answers that can not be applied to all European abroad workers. In general, qualitative interviews with fewer respondents do also provide risks of atypical responses considering how the focus lies on getting a deeper understanding from a few respondents. Another limitation of this thesis' conclusion is that only tourist destinations in Greece and Cyprus are covered among the abroad and local

workers. The possibility therefore exists that Spain, Italy or other European countries have different levels of compliance to decent work in terms of fair wage, work security and personal development.

## 6.4 Future Research

We suggest further research in this area with focus on European workers where more respondents are participating, working in a bigger variety of European countries and where more definitions of decent work are evaluated. The purpose would be to further confirm or challenge the conclusion of this thesis and extend the knowledge of this research area. Additionally we believe that employment contracts and surveys can be a valuable feature in research as we did not have the ability to include this in our thesis.

It would also be interesting to investigate how European tourism firms can improve their control over working conditions for both abroad and local workers. It would add a dimension of how big impact culture, rank in occupation and different labor markets have on working conditions. We have in our thesis seen how HR managers' perceptions can differ compared to the workers and how solutions for decent work have been lacking without the HR managers knowledge. Possible solutions to this problem could have big impacts on both employees and the company's performance.

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# APPENDIX

## Interview guide

### *HR-managers*

1. What do your arrangements within employment at the tourist resorts look like?
2. What percentage (approximately) of your staff are seasonal employees? Through your company or local workers in tourist resorts at the hotels you work with?
3. How does the need for staff vary during the year and how do you handle the staff turnover that follows? Does it vary compared to local employees and Swedes who work in tourist resorts?
4. Is there an opportunity for career development for your employees at your travel destinations?
5. How do you work with variation in work tasks for employees at your destinations?
6. Could you tell us about your code of conduct? Are hired staff and staff working in partner hotels covered by your code of conduct?
7. How does your work with Travelife work?
8. Can you tell us about the measuring instruments that Travelife uses?
9. What consequences do you see from your HR work?
10. Is there any possibility of seeing an employment contract for a Swedish employee who works at your tourist facilities and for a local employee?
11. Have you carried out an employee survey that we can take part in?

### *Abroad workers & local workers*

1. How old are you?
2. What position do you have and what are your tasks?
3. Are you a resident in the country you work in?
4. Under what arrangements are you employed? (Part time/seasonal/full time etc)
5. How many hours and days a week do you work? What is the work schedule for a typical week, does it change? Do you work overtime?

6. Are you worried about being dismissed? in general and in case of economic fluctuations?
7. Do you have any opportunity for career progression within your current workplace? Do you see yourself working here in 1 year? 5 years? Do you want to have a career in your current workplace or in the tourism industry?
8. What made you apply for this job?
9. Do you consider your work environment safe against disease (covid 19?), violence, occupational hazards?
10. Do you consider your work environment to contribute to your well being, does it bring stress?
11. Have you developed new skills in your workplace, have you received training for it?
12. What work tasks do you have? Do you consider them to be varied?
13. Do you complete the task yourself from beginning to end, is the final service/product divided into several tasks between several workers?
14. Do you consider your work a contribution to the company's success/final product, how important do you consider your tasks are to the company's business?
15. How much responsibility do you have within your job? What decisions do you have to make and how much freedom do you have?
16. Are you receiving feedback in your workplace? How often in what form?
17. Regarding your wage, does it cover your cost of living? (rent, food etc) Can you afford any additional entertainment? (going out to eat, cinema, holiday etc?) If so, how often?
18. Has your wage changed in your current job? What has the development looked like?