

UNIVERSITY OF LJUBLJANA
SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS

MASTER'S THESIS

CAROLINA INÉS ALDAO BECÚ

EUROPEAN MASTER IN TOURISM MANAGEMENT
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES, UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN DENMARK
SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS, UNIVERSITY OF LJUBLJANA
FACULTY OF TOURISM, UNIVERSITY OF GIRONA

MASTER'S THESIS

**ANALYSIS OF TRAVEL MOTIVATION:
CASE OF LONGYEARBYEN, HIGH ARCTIC**

Ljubljana, July, 2019

CAROLINA INÉS ALDAO BECÚ


AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT

The undersigned Carolina Inés Aldao Becú, a student at the University of Ljubljana, School of Economics and Business, (hereafter: SEB LU), author of this written final work of studies with the title Analysis of travel motivation: Case of Longyearbyen, High Arctic, prepared under supervision of Prof. Dr. Tanja Mihalič.

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INTRODUCTION

“The image of the Arctic region has been that of a remote, mysterious, adventurous place with unusual natural beauty and wildlife” (Chen & Wang, 2015, p. 350). The Arctic is usually perceived as a far distant area ruled by the extreme cold and bad weather conditions (Kaltenborn & Emmelin, 1993). According to the researcher’s perspective, the High Arctic, the northernmost area of the world, is still lacking in research in relation to travel motivation, meaning, the driving force that makes tourists choose this destination among others. Most of the tourism studies aim to protect the Arctic from the global warming and from the harm caused by the visitors, since the Arctic represents one of the most vulnerable places on Earth. However, little attention is paid to the needs of the tourists that choose the High Arctic as their travel destination. Therefore, previous analyses on motivations done by psychologists and sociologists will be the starting point for a deep research concerning travellers and tourism in the High Arctic.

The destination of this study is Longyearbyen, the northernmost town in the world and the administrative centre of the archipelago of Svalbard. This destination was chosen due to its particular geographical location at 78° North, close to the North Pole. Moreover, Svalbard represents the northernmost accessible place on Earth, where the following three main human activities are gaining interest: research, mining and tourism (Viken & Jørgensen, 1998). This destination is not intended for explorers anymore, but also for average travellers. This is because recreational activities in Longyearbyen have started due to the opening of the airport in 1975 and the construction of new facilities (Kaltenborn & Emmelin, 1993). Therefore, little by little, this town is gaining popularity among average tourists. Accordingly, the recent developing of tourism activities in this area and the curiosity to explore the motivational side of the tourists, originates the need of researching what brings tourists to choose the Far North for their holidays.

Furthermore, according to the researcher’s perspective, people that reach the High Arctic represent an interesting target to analyse. To face the extreme weather conditions represents a challenge that those that have determination and an adventurous spirit do accept. Therefore, the need of approaching to them in order to study further the connection between Arctic travellers and this vast land. The cold weather, the Northern Lights, the Polar Nights and the Polar bears represent the hook to unveil the mystery of what offers the High Arctic that urges to visit the place and appreciate its unique features and attractions. Thus, the following research questions represent the basis for this study:

1. What motivates people to travel to Longyearbyen, High Arctic?
2. How does Social Media influence in the travel motivation to visit Longyearbyen?

The first research question aims to understand the reason why tourists are motivated to choose Longyearbyen as a travel destination, by analysing the personal motivational needs

of the tourists, their past travel experience, the peculiarities of the destination, the expectations set on their trip and the misconceptions about the Arctic life. Consequently, the second research question focuses on the analysis of how Social Media plays a powerful role in that travel motivation to reach this destination selected for the study.

The research follows a qualitative analysis and a constructivist paradigm, bearing in mind that multiple realities help to understand the motivation to travel to the High Arctic (Jennings, 2010). Secondary research facilitates to get to know about Longyearbyen, and Primary research represents the main tool to gather empirical data from tourists, the focus of this study. Face-to-face interviews are conducted at the destination to different groups of travellers found either in the town centre in their spare time, or when they are joining outdoor attractions. Besides, short interviews are done via private message on Instagram. Both ways serve to get as much information as possible from different approaches.

The scheme of the study follows five chapters. The first one is the literature review, where Maslow's theory of the hierarchy of needs is presented, as a way to understand how those requirements introduced by Maslow do influence in the travel choice (Maslow, 1954). Then, Pearce's model of the travel career ladder is researched so as to help establishing any connection among Arctic travellers' motivation in regard to their past travel experience (Pearce, 1988). In relation, Crompton's push and pull motivational theory and Dann's travel motives are studied, in order to find what attracts tourists to go to Longyearbyen, and what is the characteristic of the High Arctic that pulls them to go there (Crompton, 1979; Dann, 1977, 1981). Moreover, expectations and misconceptions are taken into account, in order to compare and contrast what are tourists waiting to find at the destination, and what was their perception of the High Arctic before the travel decision was made. The influence of Social Media is analysed so as to understand the role that it exerts in the decision-making process of a trip, by studying the phenomenon of the travel fear of missing out (Przybylski, Murayama, DeHaan & Gladwell, 2013) and the positive influence of Social Media in inspiring travellers and helping demystify misconceptions of the Arctic.

The second chapter involves the presentation of the case, where the High Arctic is introduced, and a detailed description about Longyearbyen is made, including its geographical location, its history, current activities and the development of the tourism industry. As well, peculiarities of the town are revealed, as a way of discovering the unique features that Longyearbyen has. The third chapter has to do with the explanation of the methodology, the way how the research is conducted. The fourth chapter represents the heart of the research, the analysis of all the empirical material gathered throughout the process of investigation, either at the destination, via Social Media or by secondary data. Moreover, this part aims to disclose the results and the discussion of what drives tourists to travel to Longyearbyen, bearing in mind the influence that Social Media exerts on people.

The fifth and last chapter has to do with the conclusion, that constitutes the closure of all the analysis made, and the sum up of the findings. It is important to bear in mind that the conclusion is developed according to a sample obtained on the wintertime of 2019. Hence, it cannot be extrapolated to other seasons. The Arctic has different natural phenomena for both winter and summer time, meaning that outdoor attractions, the sun light and cold, does create different panoramas for each time of the year, and therefore, different types of motivations to travel to this part of the world.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

The following chapter introduces academic literature concerning the travel motivation process and the influence that Social Media has in the tourists' motivation, which constitute the two main parts of this study. The aim is to discuss the key academic concepts so as to start analysing the two research questions that represent the main axes of this research.

1.1 The travel motivation process

1.1.1 Maslow's theory of the hierarchy of needs

'Maslow's hierarchy of needs', also called, 'Maslow's motivational hierarchy' is a theory that was developed by the American psychologist Abraham Maslow in 1943 that explains the progressive structure of human needs and the motivational process towards their fulfilment. It is considered to be one of the most influential studies of the human motivations. Maslow's publication '*Motivation and Personality*', in 1954, allowed researchers, psychologists and marketing professionals to put special attention on the human hierarchy of needs, from the basic physiological ones to the more complex ones related to personal growth (Huang & Hsu, 2009; Luo & Deng, 2008). Consequently, by understanding this theory, it gives the possibility to understand how the need of travelling leads to specific behaviours in order to have that need fulfilled.

Maslow's theory, the hierarchy of needs, as it was named in his paper '*A theory of human motivation*', is represented by a pyramid figure that describes the five needs of human-beings, starting from the 'physiological needs' at the bottom as the very basic human needs, followed by 'safety', 'social belonging' (also referred to as 'love and belonging), 'esteem' and 'self-actualization' on the very top of the pyramid (Poldma, 2016). Motivation comes from the moment when a person needs to satisfy a deprivation. In order to feel motivated or to have a desire to move to the next level of this pyramid, each level of needs have to be fairly sated, starting from the very bottom one.

The 'physiological needs' can be defined as the main elements that humans need in order to survive. That is, food and water, to have a shelter, the need to sleep and staying warm. That ought to mean that, the lack of the basic need of food and nutrients or a person being exposed to extreme temperature conditions, could cause the death, in the worst case scenario (Taormina & Gao, 2013). The difference between the physiological need and the following ones on an upper level of the pyramid, is that the former one is somatically located. Hence, when a person is in lack of any specific physiological need, he/she may tend at the same time to have the best comfort in order to counterbalance that deprivation. Nonetheless, these needs are the most urgent to be satisfied (Maslow, 1954).

The second level of the Maslow's theory corresponds to 'safety needs', which are also considered basic needs. Safety means to be protected physically from harm, and security, to have stability in terms of economy, emotions and wellbeing. These basic needs are also a primitive instinct, since thousands of years ago, humans lived in a state of alarm in the case of any danger coming from possible predators (Taormina & Gao, 2013). Following this line of thinking, the human-being is an innate seeker for safety. Adults activate this need especially in case of an emergency, like social chaos, war and natural disasters (Maslow, 1954). Going further on the third level, 'social belonging needs' or the need of 'love and belonging', it means the wish of building an interpersonal relationship with others in terms of friendship, love and family bonds. This need could be translated as the hunger for some kind of love (Taormina & Gao, 2013). Social inclusion is the key element to make the individual feel accepted by the others.

Following Maslow's pyramid, it comes the fourth level, the 'esteem needs', which are related to the desire of social recognition, that is, the need of being identified with a community or group of people, with social values, as well as the need of being accepted and respected by others, and to have esteem for oneself, that is, the inner evaluation of a person regarding the own nature (Taormina & Gao, 2013). Besides, esteem needs are also related to the cultural background of the person. In some societies, becoming a good hunter, for example, increases the chances of gaining recognition from others (Maslow, 1954). At the present, esteem might be seen as one of the main absences in the modern societies, where technology is replacing human contact, and selfishness might be the main cause of esteem deprivation.

Finally, in the top level of the Maslow's pyramid comes the 'self-actualization needs', that means, to be able to achieve the most that a person can do for themselves, in terms of all the potential to develop their skills to fulfil in terms of maturity and autonomy (Maslow, 1954). In other words, it represents seeking to grow as a person by achieving new goals. In this stage, the person explores looking for creativity, to gain knowledge, and foster their utmost potentials (Ivtzan, Gardner, Bernard, Sekhon & Hart, 2013). This level is for sure more abstract, since it depends on the importance that each person gives to a personal goal in order

to get the most out of it. An example of this concept would be for a student, to have the propose of studying hard in order to be the first of the class (Marvin-Humann, 2008).

As regards this self-actualization level, Maslow (1954, p. 46) states “what a man can be, he must be”. That is to say, the person must respect and follow what their own nature wants him to be. Is it here on this stage where the ‘peak experience’ fits, as described by Maslow (1964) as a moment of intense happiness where the feeling of fulfilment is accomplished. That peak-moment surpasses any other usual moment, in terms of intensity (Privette, 1983). Laski (1962, p. 5) also described a peak experience as “characterized by being joyful, transitory, unexpected, rare, valued, and extraordinary”. However, a peak experience is momentary, since “Peak experiences do not last, and cannot last. Intense happiness is episodic, not continuous” (Maslow, 1954, Preface XV). Thus, they are most expected at uncommon settings, where activities, attractions and scenery are impressive, sometimes considered as ‘unique’. As well, solitude, contemplation, deep relaxation and appreciating the surrounding nature are considered factors that enhance moments of full realization (McDonald, Wearing & Ponting, 2009). As a conclusion to this pyramid, Figure 1 shows the Maslow’s hierarchy of needs already described.

Figure 1: Maslow’s hierarchy of needs



Source: McLeod, 2017

After having described ‘Maslow’s motivational hierarchy’, it is important to briefly explain the difference among motive, motivation and driver. The driver represents the beginning of the process of motivation, since it allows the individual to be focused on their aim (Vítez, n.d.), while motivation is the sum up of drives or desires a person has that pushes him towards acts and preferences. Motivation itself is the general concept that makes a person

have the energy to pursue an objective. However, Hindley & Font (2018, p. 5) state, motivation “cannot be observed”, but it is the reason to understand human behaviour. In addition, motives are “an internal factor that arouses, directs, and integrates a person’s behaviour” (Murray, 1964, p. 7), in other words, the driver that makes a person learn, explore, and be active, physically and socially (Perrett, 2007). Following this line of thinking, motivation leads to be persistent by being focused on concreting an action. Applicable to the tourism field, the motives are ‘the reason why’ to achieve a destination, and the motivation, the generic drive towards it (Gnoth, 1997).

In the present, in order to fulfil the personal ego, attention is usually focused on trying to satisfy the needs of the pyramid’s highest levels. Besides, money, time and success may seem to be the new basic needs of the 21st century, where being able to purchase material things and having the chance to have the best vacations, are the ‘ideal’ conditions that a person aims in order to strive for it. Humanity’s needs are changing due to technology, to a faster speed of the daily life and also due to some social norms that still govern people’s life, meaning, that there are unwritten rules that people feel that they are compelled to follow in order to have a ‘normal’ type of life (Maslow, 1954).

As Maslow (1954, p. 24) states: “motivation is constant, never ending, fluctuating, and complex”. As soon as a need or desire is sated, the next one appears and becomes the one to be satisfied (ibid.). The human-being is in a constant need of desires. Healthy people, meaning, physically and mentally, are likely to reach the top levels of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, since they are motivated to reach self-actualization. It is here where tourism and travel fits, since commonly speaking, free time and vacations are linked to this concept (Gnoth, 1997). Therefore, the more levels a person achieves to reach, the more interested is in progressing through self-actualization, since the challenge of new experiences constitute one of the aims of the internal process of personal growth. However, as Pearce (1988) states, it is not right to think that reaching the top of the pyramid is somehow ‘better’ than being able to reach lower levels. Moreover, reaching the top level does not mean that the person will be granted to feel ‘completed’.

1.1.2 The application of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs in the tourism field

Travel motivation is described by Dann (1981, p. 205) as “a meaningful state of mind which adequately disposes an actor or group of actors to travel”, while Pizam, Neumann & Reichel (1979, p. 195) state that it is “a set of needs and attitudes which predispose a person to act in a specific touristic goal-directed way”. Thus, this concept represents the starting point to analyse further the connection between Maslow’s hierarchy of needs and tourism. Travel motivation involves being curious to explore more of the surroundings where a person lives. To explore means to go beyond their homes and their routine. Consequently, motivation to travel could be born as a way of satisfying an unconscious need (Pizam *et al.*, 1979).

Travelling provides cultural background as well as the chance to broaden the mind. Otherwise, lack of motivation will lead to standstill, since there is no desire to satisfy. As Šimková (2014, p. 317) states, “travelling gives some kind of a picture about the tourist, his/her personality, attitude, values and lifestyle”. This means that, through travelling, it is possible to discover the interests, worries, fears, ethics, challenges, and the social bond that a tourist establishes with the local people and the destination.

By applying Maslow’s hierarchy of needs in tourism, each level could be fulfilled independently. For the first stage, ‘physiological needs’, gastronomy and accommodation satisfy the need of food and having a shelter (Šimková, 2014). As a consequence, it is the need of relaxation that urges the basic need of sleeping and relieving tension physically and mentally speaking (Wu, 2003). In this level, the accommodation’s features, the culinary offers of the place, as well as the recreational activities involved at the destination, would cover the basic needs of a person (Lowry, 2017). Following the next level of the pyramid, named ‘safety’, a destination should ensure peace and provide certain standards of safety concerning threats like crime, diseases, political and economic crisis as well as natural catastrophes, in order to make a tourist feel confident to explore that place.

Talking about the third level, ‘social belonging needs’, it may be translated as the need of being involved with local residents or a community by sharing habits and traditions, as well as to join a group of tourists when participating of a tour, with the aim of having companionship. To have social interaction by meeting people from other backgrounds, culture and languages, could represent the motivation to start a trip, so as to challenge oneself to face a different environment (Šimková, 2014). Furthermore, there may also be the need of searching the own ‘roots’ regarding family and ‘ethnic’ (Wu, 2003), in order to understand how a particular culture or society was born, and to know the ancestors’ past history. In this sense, affection is shown towards the own family bond.

Concerning the fourth level, ‘esteem’, it is the willingness of achievement the trigger to travel, for the aim of making a self-conviction of being capable to face a challenge. At the same time, the individual feels important as regards their peers, gaining prestige and status. As a way of summing up this stage, is it by the satisfaction of the own ego the trigger for being motivated to travel. Travelling reinforces esteem considering that the more places and experiences a person has, the more ‘interesting’ and ‘learned’ a person becomes, either from the point of view of others, as well as for oneself, since the person feels more confident to interact socially. Furthermore, this fourth level is connected to the previous one, ‘social belonging’, meaning that, when a person is already fulfilled in the ‘esteem need’ stage, is it more likely that he is eager to feel being attracted by someone either in terms of love or company of friends and family (Wu, 2003).

At last, for the fifth level, ‘self-actualization needs’, the tourist experiences a self-discovery and it is the judge of their own travel satisfaction (Wu, 2003). This level is subjective to the

tourist perception, since experiencing something positively or negatively is related to their personal demands (Šimková, 2014). Reaching this level can be done either by a learning process while travelling, or by finding the sense of doing certain activities, to look for personal growth and to enhance the own potential (Lowry, 2017). According to Pearce (1982), self-actualization is the main reason why tourists desire to travel, followed by the need of esteem, love and belonging, safety and physiological needs, the opposite way as the pyramid states the hierarchy for fulfilling human-needs.

It is important to bear in mind that travel motivation “is the driving force behind tourist behaviour” (Hsu & Huang, 2008, p. 14). Therefore, the importance to focus attention on this approach, in order to understand what is the force that makes a tourist travel. According to Pearce (1982), the attractiveness of travelling lies in the fact that it allows completing the motivational needs’ pyramid. Since travelling is the driver to fulfil some needs, it diverts the attention from routine issues. Therefore, when travelling, behaviour and empathy is shown, as well as tolerance and different personal attributes that were previously dormant. The tourist seeks an environment out of the ordinary where somehow life is different from the routine. Consequently, different behaviours come out in order to face this ‘alternative’ temporary reality. By understanding the needs of a tourist, it is more likely to define their travel choices and to understand why some destinations are more favourable to satisfy a specific stage within the Maslow’s hierarchy of needs. That is, according to the importance that the person gives to a specific stage of the pyramid, the aim of travelling could have a gastronomic purpose, or the mean of social interaction, or self-realization in the case of challenging oneself in adventure tourism, for example (ibid.).

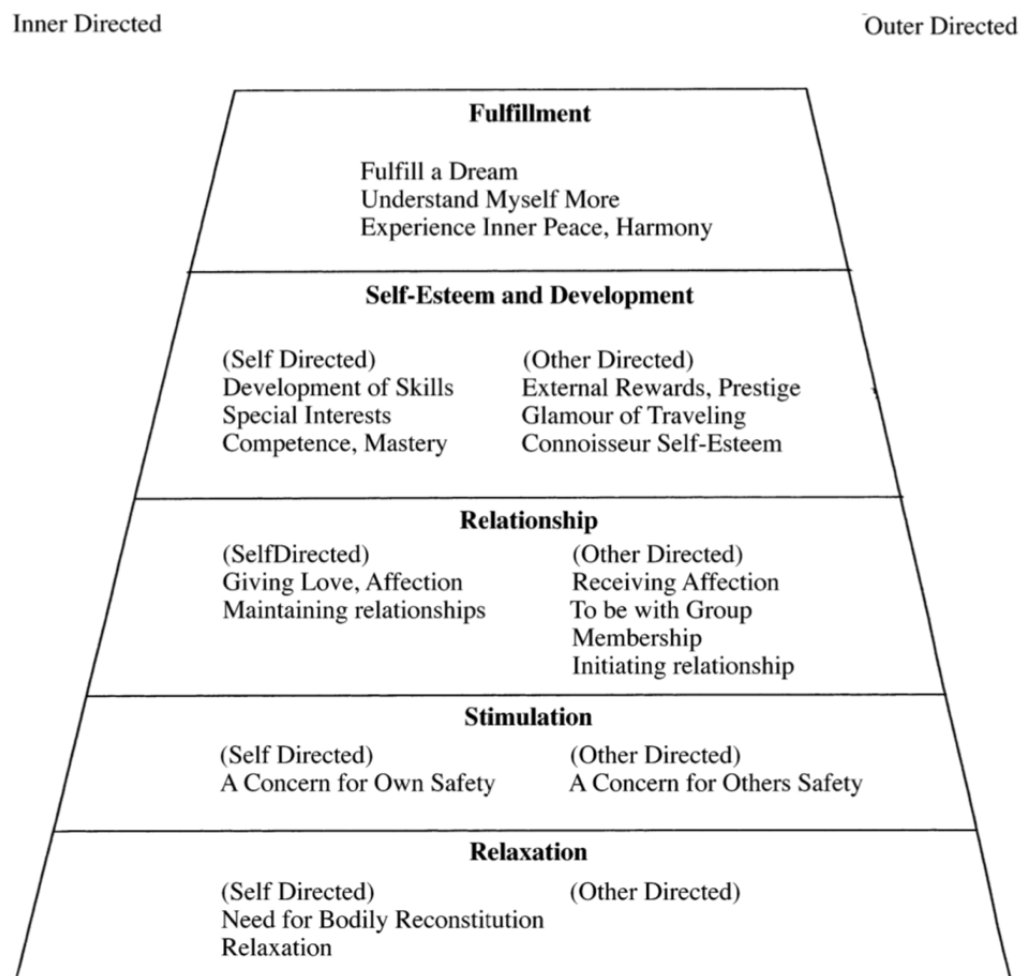
1.1.3 Pearce’s model of the travel career ladder

Maslow’s hierarchy of needs’ theory has been applied in the tourism field in order to explain further the travel motivation. One example is the ‘travel career ladder’, a theory presented by the professor Philip Pearce in his book *‘The Ulysses Factor’* in 1988. It can be described as the “motivational career in travel” (Pearce & Caltabiano, 1983, p. 16) describing the sense that a person’s motivation is constantly changing, and the travel career does go according to the past travel experiences (Pearce & Caltabiano, 1983). Indeed, this theory uses the concepts of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, in the sense of a ladder seeking maturation in the realization of self-actualization (Ryan, 1998). When travel experience is gained, tourists seek to move forward on the pyramid, building a career goal (Hsu & Huang, 2008). According to Pearce (1988), the term career involves a progressing in a sequential of life’s events. In this sense, the same happens to a tourist by following a progression of different experiences along his life.

As shown in Figure 2, by following Maslow’s theory it can be found the different stages that involves a travel career pyramid. Along the levels, needs can be born from an inner or self-

directed, or external or outer directed approach, meaning that the motivational factors to achieve a travel goal can be produced by an internal or external need or force. It has also been argued that this scheme shows more a humanistic psychology than the Maslow's pyramid. Nevertheless, this concept is tourism-related, so it is only applicable in the field of leisure (Ryan, 1998). Tourists at the early stages of their travel career ladder may be willing to focus their motivations to satisfy inner directed factors rather than outer directed. One example could be the concern of the own safety (Huang & Hsu, 2009). Another example could be the need of relaxing at a beach, just to have the basic need of 'sleeping' satisfied.

Figure 2: The travel career ladder



Source: Ryan, 1998

There is a link between the past travel experience of an individual, the current motivation and the future willingness to achieve a new travel goal. In other words, a person will seek to satisfy different motivations according to their needs at the present time, and also bearing in mind all the travel experience that the person has already gained in life. Therefore, the more experienced, the higher expectations to reach the top levels of the motivation pyramid

(Huang & Hsu, 2009). This means, that a person at an initial stage of his travel career, might just seek to fulfil the lowest level of physiological needs, while the most experienced ones, might seek to fulfil the “development of relationships, self-esteem purposes and even self-actualisation motives” (Pearce, 1988, p. 28). For example, a person travelling abroad for the first time, may choose a package tour, in order to feel more confident and to have every detail arranged. Thus, the physiological need of relaxation and safety needs are covered, but, after gaining confidence and experience, the person may feel the need of becoming independent in his travel career by choosing another type of trip in order to interact with locals and have the ‘self-esteem and development’ need satisfied (Ryan, 1998). In this sense, experienced and more-frequent travellers do give more value to reach ‘self-actualization’ than those not experienced ones, that tend to give more value to ‘relaxation’ need (Huang & Hsu, 2009). Consequently, on the one hand, those at a higher career level tend to interact with the host-site more actively, by meeting locals as well as by discovering the surroundings. On the other hand, those at a lower career level tend to look for stimulus and safety and see destinations in a more-romantic way (Perrett, 2007). It is argued that ‘self-actualized’ people do have a dash of spontaneity and fun that makes them interact easily with many surroundings (Ryan, 1998).

The concept of career ladder sums up the patterns and motives that leads a tourist to seek for new destinations. This concept means that a person is seeking satisfaction by gaining more travel experience and being more matured in the field, so as to build its own travel career goals. In this sense, there is a special energy that makes the person seek for new challenges to achieve the appetite of curiosity. This theory is easily compared to any career work. At the beginning, a person might get easily satisfied by visiting places considered not very challenging to go, but, when travel experience increases, they may ascend the ladder. However, this is not a fixed concept. As Pearce & Lee (2005, p. 236) share, “there is a strong possibility that people may have certain dominant and constant travel motivations that act as a core force to travel regardless of their travel experience level”.

Nevertheless, a person’s travel career ladder may change. It does not have to be lineal and always moving forward. There might be some contingencies such as financial or health issues. It may happen that the ladder can stop, make a pause, move backwards and return to the initial stage (Ryan, 1998), or even traveller’s motivation can change. That is the concept of dynamism that has to be present at any person’s career ladder. Hence, Blichfeldt (2006) suggests that the travel career ladder should not be considered as a series of steps to achieve the top, but a change in the motivational patterns throughout the life according to the experience gained (Pearce & Lee, 2005). Therefore, a new conceptual framework is introduced by using the term pattern instead of ladder. By replacing the word ‘ladder’ with ‘patterns’, a more dynamic concept is built, since throughout the life, a person can develop new motivations that will lead to create a pattern that will conduct their travel career (Pearce & Lee, 2005). In this way, the attention will not be focused on the analogy of ‘climbing a ladder’, where there is a progressive line towards reaching the top. Instead, the pattern will

run as an indicator, since according to the experience already gained, that person could feel becoming enough mature to choose new destinations that can match their expectations and make fulfil their needs (Perrett, 2007).

1.1.4 Crompton's push/pull motivational theory and Dann's travel motives

Motivations have been studied throughout the time in order to re-establish the inner equilibrium in human beings. When a new need arises, disequilibrium starts. Therefore, push and pull factors emerge in order to restore that disequilibrium, as a way of undertaking some actions to fulfil some needs. A trip, therefore, is a response on the willingness to be sated by the richness of a new place. Consequently, push and pull motivations are analysed in order to study what drives a person to travel to a new destination. Motivation is just one variable that allows the study of travel behaviour (Crompton, 1979). However, it may be the most important force, since it is the starting point for preparing and organizing future actions.

Within the process of motivation, emotions play an important role in the leisure field, since travelling involves a set of recreational activities whose aim is to satisfy those push motivations in order to reset the personal equilibrium. Basically, by travelling, the basic goal is to seek pleasure (Gnoth, 1997). It is important to remember that tourists seek to compensate the imbalance produced by his daily life. Therefore, the need of analysing the travellers' behaviour in this alternative setting that they choose to visit.

On the one hand, the push factors are those that "drive the tourist to leave their current situation", and on the other hand, the pull factors are those that "encourage or attract the tourist to the vacation destination" (Perrett, 2007, p. 22). Push motivations represent the need for holidays, and pull motivations, the reason why a specific destination is chosen (Goossens, 2000). Those two forces enable a tourist to make their world a bit more exciting than the routine. Parrinello (1993) states that it is the daily life that creates the need for push factors, to escape from ordinary activities and stressful situations. Therefore, push motivations do not only stimulate the desire to travel, but they also influence to choose the destination according to people's needs.

Accordingly, push motivations are those inner needs to be satisfied, the drive for an action, such as the need of resting, to escape from the mundane, to take care of the own health, to be in contact with others, and the need of prestige. Balancing those inner desires, the destination itself represents what the push motivations are looking for to sate the needs. Thus, the pull motivation makes a destination be attractive due to its features, such as beaches, mountains, facilities, etc. (Hsu & Huang, 2008). Consequently, the push motivation represents the desire to travel, being the tourist the subject of the action, and the pull motivation, the attractiveness that induces someone to visit a place. As Dann (1981, p. 190) sums up: "the destinal pull in response to the motivational push", the "whether to go"

(push factor) and the “where to go” (pull factor) (Klenosky, 2002, p. 385). Hence, according to Dann (1981, p. 207), “analytically, and often both logically and temporally, push factors precede pull factors”, meaning that first, there is an internal force that pushes someone to leave, and at the same time, an external force, i.e. features and attractions of the destination, that pulls the person to travel there (Klenosky, 2002).

Crompton (1979) states that push motivations are intrinsically psychologically based since they are inner needs, while pull factors are cultural driven, since it is the destination that is showing its own features. Hence, on the one hand, he identifies seven psychological motives or push factors to seek on a trip, such as: “escape from a perceived mundane environment, exploration and evaluation of self, relaxation, prestige, regression, enhancement of kinship relationships, and facilitation of social interaction” (Crompton, 1979, p. 408). ‘Escape from the mundane’ means the need of going somewhere away from home; ‘exploration and self-discovery’ is the result of putting oneself in another context; ‘relaxation’ involves calming the psyche and enjoying leisure activities; ‘prestige’ means the appreciation of the destination’s unique features; ‘regression’ is represented by the chance of feeling ‘free’ by doing things that would not seem to be appropriate to do during the daily life, or by experiencing a different lifestyle; ‘enhancement of kinship relationships’ has to do with the opportunity of strengthen relationships, and finally, ‘facilitation of social interaction’ is represented by the chance of meeting new people (ibid.).

In addition, Crompton describes two cultural motives or pull factors, such as novelty and education, since it is expected that the experience at the destination will be connected to some learning, by having the chance of seeing a distinctive attraction that the place offers. Also, novelty means the curiosity for the new, for the different, as well as the opportunity to appreciate the feeling of a new adventure or experience, the need of leaving a place and discover a new one. Furthermore, a destination that is endangered could also represent a pull motivation (Crompton, 1979).

According to Dann (1977), Lundberg was concerned about the lack of studies related to tourist motivations. Much research has been done in the field of tourists’ behaviour, but very few investigations were made in order to answer the following question “What makes tourists travel?” (Dann, 1977, p. 185). Through this question, much attention is paid on the push motivations rather than the pulls, since the attraction of the destination is left behind (Hsu & Huang, 2008). Therefore, by answering this question on a superficial way, the answer might be to escape from the ordinary, the mundane and the daily life, but looking a bit deeper, that need of travelling might be the cause to satisfy deeper needs.

In addition to this major oversight, the need of escaping from the emptiness of the routine generates what Dann (1977) identifies as ‘anomie’ from his sociological point of view. A person experiences ‘anomie’ in a society where norms get weak and loose its force. Hence, Dann states that push factors arise as a way of reverting the sense of isolation caused by the

routine life, and therefore comes the need of escaping from everything. Indeed, 'anomie' creates the driving force to stimulate someone to travel. Wars, political and economic crisis, social instability and the consequent feeling of meaningless, predisposes someone to create a parallel world, either because of the need of escaping from reality or because their life is lack of stimulation and novelty. Hence, people create ideal images of what could become real in their next trip (Dann, 1977, 1981; Hsu & Huang, 2008).

Following the idea of 'anomie', comes 'ego-enhancement'. Travelling can boost one's ego. Hence, this is another push factor that makes a person travel. Gaining recognition from others could be obtained by travelling to exotic or exclusive places. In this way, deeper needs are waiting to be satisfied such as to increase self-esteem. Ambition will be the mean to gain recognition from others, and therefore build a career ladder, by gaining experience as a way of climbing the socio-economic status ladder. A person may need to travel to a place in order to experience feeling superior respect to the locals. That superiority can either be consequence of the ignorance of the tourist, that looks down on the economic status of the locals, or either because the destination is set up in a poorer economic environment, that makes the tourist feel superior in terms of money, contrasting his situation with the local community. Therefore, the person can boast of this experience when he gets back home (Dann, 1977).

Furthermore, Pearce (1982) emphasizes that Dann's sociological research on 'anomie' and 'ego-enhancement' represents the lack of love and belonging that corresponds to the third level of the Maslow's pyramid, for the former one, and the lack of self-esteem, the fourth level of Maslow's theory, for the latter one. Nevertheless, those two concepts represent two important push factors to pay attention to. By summing up, tourists' average goal is to feel free at the destination, by feeling no strings, and to be able to do things that the person is not capable to do in their daily life. In this way, a sense of full enjoyment is created in their mind, in order to experience a 'fantasy world' that is not possible to reach in their mundane life (Dann, 1981). In other words, there is this concept of 'liberation' behind the idea of travelling.

In addition, Iso-Ahola (1982) proposes that push factors are a force of either seeking or escaping, where seek indicates an inner-state and escaping is produced by external characteristics. Following this concept, on the one hand, when seeking, a person looks from the outer world to satisfy what is needed from the inside, that is, recreational moments such as relaxation, experiences with other cultures, feeling renewed, among others, whose aim is to re-establish the inner equilibrium, in other words, to compensate the imbalance produced by their daily life (Gnoth, 1997). On the other hand, by escaping, there is this concept of staying away from the cause that produces a disequilibrium, that is, the daily problems, the routine and stressful lifestyle, caused either by the own job or the surrounding environment. Hence, a tourist may escape from their daily life by travelling but might not be seeking what

he needs until he gets involved with the local culture, people or activities at the destination (Perrett, 2007).

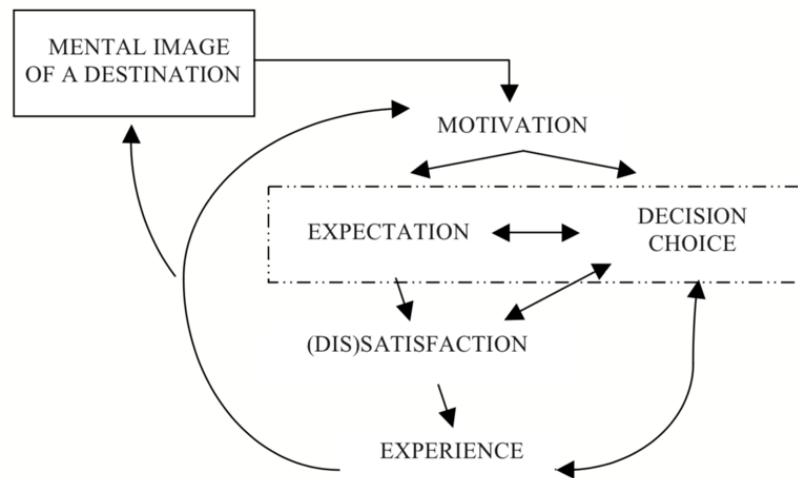
It has been observed that push and pull motivations are linked together, since travelling represents a two-way analysis (Hsu & Huang, 2008). That is to say, push motivations need from pull motivations to satisfy needs, whereas pull motivations without a need to sate, would not have much sense to be. Conversely, Pizam *et al.* (1979), agree that pull factors should not be a topic to study, since they just focus on the attributes and attractions of the destination. Therefore, they propose to take this part out of any research related to tourists' motivations. Nevertheless, there is an inner force that makes a person travel and be attracted to a place that has specific features that will fulfil some needs. Moreover, a destination itself can be attractive, but the action of going there will be concreted if the person is in need of fulfilling that desire. Consequently, when studying the motivation to travel, special attention must be paid to the push factors since they are the cause of concreting the pull motivations (Hsu & Huang, 2008).

1.1.5 Gnoth's study of motivation and expectation formation

Starting from the point that motivation is the driving force to travel, in 1997, Gnoth established the relationship between motivation, expectation and attitude towards achieving travel goals. Motivation is the trigger to look for a new destination to satisfy needs, therefore, those needs create expectations in a place, and those expectations, determine the behaviour of a tourist, named attitude (Hsu, Cai & Li, 2010). A person's disposition towards an action is followed by their personality and the motives that pushes him to follow that action. Furthermore, that disposition could be translated as the way the person seeks to fulfil a need (Gnoth, 1997).

According to Šimková (2014), the very starting point of the mental process of willing to travel is represented by the motivation, as shown in Figure 3, that is, the generic drive that expresses a need to be sated, conveyed by the image of a place that has already been created in the tourist' mind. Next comes the expectation formation of a place, that leads to the decision choice of going to a destination. Moreover, to make this happen, there should be a dose of excitement to reach the expectation. The satisfaction or dissatisfaction, once the destination is reached, will create the overall experience that could regret or confirm the right choice of the destination. In addition, that lived experience will create a new mental image of the destination or enhance the one that was already built. Furthermore, a satisfactory experience could be the next motivation to come back to a place.

Figure 3: The travel decision process

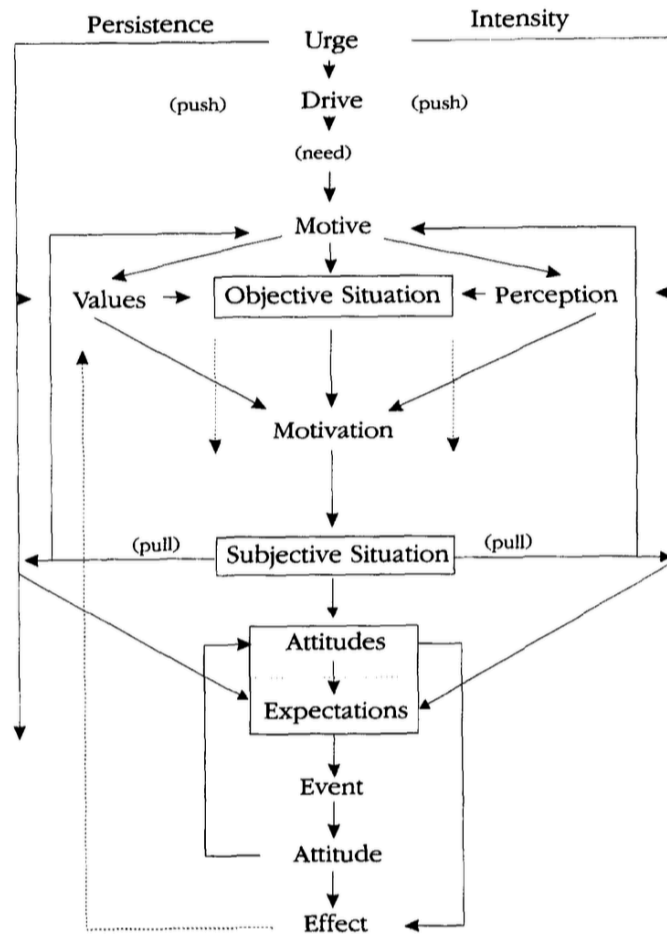


Source: Šimková, 2014

Gnoth (1997, p. 297) describes that “needs can be stimulated either from within a person or from without”. When needs are born from an inner desire, they are automatically converted into an urge, as shown in Figure 4. Therefore, the urge is an emotional driving force, described as ‘push factor’, and it is the first step to move towards an action, since it combines the mental and physical force to approach the aim. Looking to satisfy the motive, meaning ‘the reason why’ that is pushing an action, in order to reach a destination, the brain, according to its perception, prepares a process of scanning the outer world. Consequently, motivation is activated in order to pursue that future action. Besides, in any society, there are some values already established which make a person create their own ones in order to judge in advance if a destination could meet or not their needs. By the result of this evaluation, expectation arises in order to anticipate if the trip will have the outcome the tourist is looking for. Additionally, this analysis describes an objective situation, since drives are proper attributes to define (ibid.).

From the pull motivational side, the subjective situation is defined by the features that a destination has. Thus, attitude, that is, the predisposition towards an action, is expressed towards accomplishing the expectation, by experiencing the upcoming event. This means that by encountering the destination, there should be a dose of excitement to reach the expectation. Furthermore, the ‘event’ represents the experience and the ‘effect’, the outcome when reaching the aim, and according to the emotions and rationality involved in the experience, the outcome could generate satisfaction or dissatisfaction on the tourist. In this process of push and pull motivation, the persistence and intensity enable to empower an experience in order to make it the most satisfactory one (Gnoth, 1997).

Figure 4: The process of motivation and expectation formation



Source: Gnoth, 1997

1.1.6 The impact of misconceptions in the travel motivation to the High Arctic

The term ‘Arctic’ is still associated with a vast quantity of misconceptions. Even more, the High Arctic is still related to the image of remoteness, mystery and wildlife. It seems as if the word itself commands respect and creates a fictional reality at people’s mind. The Arctic is still perceived as an inaccessible place in the Far North, where the lowest temperatures on Earth can be found, and where no one lives (Kaltenborn & Emmelin, 1993). This is partially true and partially false. The Arctic still represents an unknown destination where knowledge of its attractions and features is still insufficient. There are still some misconceptions about the Arctic that need to be demystified:

- The Cold: According to Stefansson (1913), already at that time, there was a frequent belief that the Arctic was governed by the cold. The only truth lies on the fact that the northern, the lower temperatures one is exposed to. On the one hand, the cold has

always been the focus on any Arctic experience. Nevertheless, as Stefansson (1913, p. 20), indicates “the fact that the cold is uniform makes it no harder to bear than if it were fluctuating”. On the other hand, there is this other misconception that wintertime is all along the year. Still, the four seasons can be experienced in the Arctic, where on summertime, between June and September, temperatures can reach up to 15°C. Moreover, the contrast between wintertime and the rest of year can be appreciated by the melting of the polar ice-caps and glaciers. To make matters more impressive, the Arctic does have vegetation. Depending on the latitude, the Far North’s vegetation is based on tundra, where some examples of low-growing vegetation can be found. Even though the tundra, called ‘permafrost’ is mostly frozen throughout the whole year, there is a layer that melts each summertime and where soggy vegetation grows (ibid.).

- Arctic storms: In the Arctic, blizzards and storms are a frequent phenomenon. However, as opposite as it is commonly believed, it does not happen every day. The Arctic has also lovely sunny days where scarcely a breath of air disturbs the stillness of the day. However, storms do also hit this area of the world, where the wind might reach up to 60 km/h, increasing the risk of avalanche in the mountainous areas.
- Clothing: It is believed that the only way to stay warm in the Arctic is to imitate Eskimos. This is half true. Even though Eskimos are the best reference to dress properly for the cold, the wind and for staying dry (Stefansson, 1913), it is also true that nowadays new technologies do good job in making light and waterproof clothes, which are as well manageable to do outdoor activities. Therefore, even though winter clothes are still expensive, there is a large quantity of brands and stores that can supply the necessity.
- The Arctic is isolated, inaccessible and an uninhabited place: According to Myers, Revkin, Romero & Krauss (2005), there are nearly four million people living above the Arctic Circle. This is due to the fact that in the last century, natural resources started to be exploited and therefore, many people moved to the Arctic looking for better opportunities (Hassol, 2004). Therefore, the Arctic is more populated as overall people do believe. Still, infrastructure does not represent a strong point, since many places are isolated from civilization and only accessible by car during summertime and snowmobile or dog/ reindeer sledding during wintertime.
- Hypothermia and frostbites: It is commonly believed that in the Arctic anyone could ‘freeze to death’ or loose fingers due to frostbites. Due to the fact that the cold represents the major concern when travelling to the Arctic, it is true that being properly dressed is where the attention should firstly be focused on. Hypothermia does not represent a frequent emergency situation. However, frostbites do, since it is associated to a long exposure of the skin at freezing temperatures. Most of the times,

frostbites do happen because of negligence or lack of awareness, when the person is not apprehensive enough of the risks of the extreme cold (Stefansson, 1913).

- Northern Lights: There is this common belief that Northern Lights will appear at any place in the Arctic. The truth is that the closer to the North Pole, the less possibilities of seeing it, since it is the Aurora compass the reference to predict the ‘Aurora Borealis’, name given by Galileo Galilei which means ‘the dawn of the north’. Therefore, this phenomenon is mostly visible between 66° and 69° North, where the Arctic circle begins. It is important to clarify that the High Arctic region is above those latitudes. Consequently, the chances of seeing the Northern Lights are fewer (Brekke, 2019).

1.2 The influence of Social Media in travel motivation

1.2.1 Facebook and Instagram as a source of travel inspiration

Social Media has changed the way how tourists share their experiences. Hence, it provides a new way of accessing to information and interact with other tourists, by sharing lived moments, contents, expectations, ideas, opinions, perspectives, information and knowledge about places. In this way, travellers “become co-designers, co-producers, co-marketers and co-consumers of tourism experiences” (Sotiriadis, 2017, p. 180). Before Social Media existed, tourists used to share their events just with closed family and friends. Today, experiences are shared widely, that means, that everyone in the world can get to know about someone’s circumstances by any Social Media platform. In addition to this, thanks to the reviews made by travellers, Social Media represents a reliable source of information about services and attractions of travel destinations. Social Media represents a source of interactive communication and feedback, where both tourists and destinations get benefits of it, since tourists learn about destinations through these platforms, and at the same time they share their experiences, and destinations get informed of the tourists’ needs (ibid.).

Two of the most used Social Media platforms are Facebook and Instagram, where users post pictures, videos, and information of any kind, such as articles, YouTube videos, etc. It is important to mention that Facebook was created in 2004, and Instagram, which is owned by Facebook, was launched in 2010 (Wikipedia, 2019a). Both platforms have gained popularity very quickly. Even though Facebook and Instagram are considered ‘non-travel-specific’ Social Media platforms, nowadays, users tend to use them as a source for discovering and getting to know more about a destination before travelling there. According to Narangajavana, Callarisa Fiol, Moliner Tena, Rodríguez Artola & Sánchez García (2017), the reason why Social Media is such a popular tool lies on the fact that everyone has the opportunity to share experiences, points of views and reviews to the world. That is to say,

its content is generated by the users, who are constantly sharing and updating posts. Hence, it is used as a daily tool for communication and consultations.

Although Facebook and Instagram are more often used to interact with others, in a minor percentage, it is used as a source of first-hand information to know about a destination's features, attractions and services (Mariani, Ek Styven & Ayeh, 2019). While on Facebook it is possible to 'like' pages related to any topic of interest, and therefore, receive on the news feed updated information, on Instagram, it is possible to follow content related to any topic by adding a hashtag before a name or a word. E.g.: #norway. Hence, by following a hashtag, the users will permanently receive new content, either pictures or videos specifically related to that topic, sometimes even live videos, shared on the 'stories' shown on top of the platform. Thanks to those videos, most of them recorded by amateur users, tourists can have an idea and create an expectation before going to experience a destination 'in situ'. Accordingly, it might represent the first approach that a traveller is having with the destination. Thus, an emotional connection is established between the tourist that is currently experiencing the destination, and the future one that will visit the place. The one already or currently at the destination, is rewarded by experiencing 'in situ' the place and by sharing the moment with others, while the tourist that is thinking about or planning to go, is gratified by the opinion and points of view of the one already at the place (Fatanti & Suyadnya, 2015).

Mariani *et al.* (2019) state that Social Media has become the target of companies and Destination Marketing Organizations that are eager to engage visitors and make them wish to go to a destination. In this way, a virtual community is built to foster travel decisions. According to Narangajavana *et al.* (2007), nowadays people tend to look for more information on Social Media rather than on the Internet, and it does not matter if the information is provided by acquaintances or not, since what it is relevant is the content itself rather than the source. Hence, a positive or negative image of a destination is perceived according to what users post, since Facebook and Instagram act as a reference to reduce uncertainty and enable to become familiar with a new destination. Moreover, what users share influence the decision-making process of a trip. Every piece of information allows the tourist to create their own image of the place (Llodra-Riera, Martínez-Ruiz, Jiménez-Zarco & Izquierdo-Yusta, 2015).

Travel interest has become a matter of mass collaboration among tourists. Mariani *et al.* (2019) discuss that Social Media is nowadays the drive to incentive users to travel, but that motivation could be either intrinsic or extrinsic, meaning that travelling could be materialized because of self-interest (intrinsic), or either because the person is in need of feeling recognition from their peers (extrinsic). In this sense, Facebook and Instagram are used either for inspirational purposes or as a way to show others their achievements when travelling. In the case of willing to fulfil an extrinsic motivation, Social Media users might experience more satisfaction by sharing or boasting about the own experience, than really enjoying the experience per se. In this case, it is perceived that those users are in need of

self-esteem and willing to experience a reward from the others. Consequently, Social Media can be a tool for people seeking either to discover virtually new destinations or for those willing to make a bucket list to boast about their travel career ladder.

As Llodra-Riera *et al.* (2015, p. 462) state, “motivation refers to a need to act in different ways to achieve the desired satisfaction”. Accordingly, the access to information, either on the Internet or Social Media determines a need to travel to a destination. As a way of satisfying that need, the tourist by accessing to the information, creates an image of the destination. That image “contains a totality of impressions, beliefs, ideas, expectations and feelings accumulated towards a place over time” (Kim & Richardson, 2003, p. 218). Hence, according to Ryan & Gu (2008), the image represents the starting point of a tourist’s expectation of a destination. Besides, Social Media represents a reference point for evaluating a destination through pictures and videos already posted. An idea of the place is formed, and this action leads to create an expectation. Furthermore, Facebook and Instagram represent a virtual approach of the experience that is desired to achieve at the destination. Lastly, according to Ellison, Steinfield and Lampe (2007), by making a comparison between Social Media users and non-users, it was reported that those spending more time on these platforms are likely to feel more satisfied because of the opportunity to be informed by other users beforehand.

1.2.2 The travel fear of missing out

As Siegel & Wang (2019) describe, Millennials represent the pioneers of the use of Social Media. Therefore, they are the most influential ones at the time of accessing to any information on these platforms. The term ‘Keeping up with the Joneses’ has emerged as a way of comparing oneself with others in terms of possessing material good and progress achieved by accomplishing goals, with the aim of experimenting recognition from others. Hence, this concept also applies for gaining travel experience. In this sense, in order to reach the current societal norms, tourists may feel the need of going to a destination just to experience being at a high social status level.

Today, Social Media also represents the way of spawning jealousy on others. It is here where the ‘travel fear of missing out’ fits, referred to as FoMO. It is defined as “a pervasive apprehension that others might be having rewarding experiences from which one is absent” (Przybylski *et al.*, 2013, p. 1841). This anxiety leads to the need of being constantly connected to Social Media in order to see what the peers are doing. Therefore, users are constantly exposed to new content, as well as the risk of having some psychological consequences, due to the huge amount of information received. Regardless of the intention behind the aim of publishing a post on a Social Media platform, it creates an opportunity to awake anxiety on others. Social Media represents nowadays the ideal set to express the own emotions and fears. Nevertheless, their users tend to show themselves favourably by sharing

pictures and videos of the brightest side of their life, as a way of impressing their peers (Hetz, Dawson & Cullen, 2015). Users rarely share the mundane aspects of their routine, and that is the cause why FoMO activates the anxiety of feeling that the own life is less exciting than the others' one, in other words, a feeling of insecurity and inferiority in relation to others' achievements.

Siegel & Wang (2019) also consider that Millennials boast their achievements by sharing their pictures or their travel locations on Facebook and Instagram. Therefore, according to the current needs of the receiver of this information, this action done could trigger a positive feeling or a bad one. This means that an image could serve as an inspiration or may awake a new need to be sated. It is claimed that Millennials spend an enormous quantity of time checking Instagram and Facebook, almost as a bad habit, doing it compulsively without even being conscious of it. They are constantly keeping tabs on other's achievements as a way of competing with their peers. From the first moment a person becomes curious about other's achievements, an internal need is awakened in order to be satisfied. The fear of missing out is originated in order to achieve what others did, meaning, related to tourism, the urge to explore the same destinations that their peers did go to.

Since tourism is attached to visual images, Facebook and Instagram represent the perfect platforms to share them. As Siegel & Wang (2019) indicate, Instagram is considered nowadays to be the most influential Social Media platform for sharing pictures and videos of trips. As well, a destination that is in danger of ceasing to exist might cause anxiety on those travellers that are worried that time is running out on a destination that is disappearing and losing its charming features due to the climate change effects, such as it happens in the High Arctic (Lemelin, Dawson, Stewart, Maher & Lueck, 2010). Therefore, travelling may represent a way of 'ticking off' a checklist of places to visit in order to feel confident by gaining recognition from others, and in this way, to feel rewarded in the sense of 'self-actualization'.

Lastly, one of the symptoms regarding this phenomenon of the fear of missing out, represents the feeling of uneasiness. According to Przybylski *et al.* (2013), 75% of the young people have already gone through this social anxiety. Zimmerman (2014) expresses that nowadays' life represents a constant search of trying to take the most advantage of an experience, and in that way, focus is not set on appreciating the small things but on looking on what others do have or what they are doing, in order to imitate them.

1.2.3 The influence of Social Media in debunking misconceptions

Due to the fact that the Arctic itself creates a whole world of misconceptions already described, at present, Social Media brings the Arctic closer to the mass audience, thanks to those users that share their current experiences. Posts seen either on Facebook or on

Instagram shorten the gap between what people imagine and reality. Thanks to the mass quantity of tourists that share publicly their experiences, the Arctic now arouses the curiosity of many sceptic travellers (Clear Channel, 2018). However, it is common that those people that have already been to the extreme Arctic, usually write about their trip or expedition as being something adventurous, as well as they may exaggerate in their telling by misusing the word ‘cold’ to describe any anecdote in a more attractive way (Stefansson, 1913).

There are some words that still stimulate the collective imagination about the Arctic, that is, words like ‘North Pole’, ‘storms’, ‘remoteness’, ‘polar night’, ‘freezing temperatures’, ‘wilderness’, ‘adventure’, ‘blizzard’, ‘Northern Lights’, ‘frostbites’, ‘avalanche’, etc. All those words instil respect in anyone, since they have a strong meaning. It seems as if those words do not belong to the mundane life of anybody (*ibid.*). Therefore, people get amazed by those factors, either by being ‘captivated’ by those pictures that share this reality on Facebook or Instagram (Fatanti & Suyadnya, 2015), or by having heard stories of other tourists, since the Arctic does not represent a traditional tourism destination.

Moreover, thanks to Instagram’s hashtags, anyone could have access to any related picture or story, e.g.: #CloseToTheNorthPole, and interact actively with those tourists that are currently at the destination, by either commenting the posts or by having a private chat through a private message. In this way, misconceptions can be demystified, and doubts can be clarified. It creates a personalized bond among the tourists as well as with other tourism stakeholders such as the Destination Marketing Organization, because, as it was already said, most of the tourism companies and enterprises promote their products and services via Social Media (Fatanti & Suyadnya, 2015; Mariani *et al.*, 2019).

An interesting fact about Social Media’s posts of the Arctic is represented by the amazing scenery that the Arctic landscape does offer. The combination of snow-covered fields, fiords and mountains makes the Arctic be attractive to the eyes. Moreover, those landscapes are sometimes referred to as a ‘fairy-tale’ atmosphere, where the peace, harmony and the sense of magnificence can be appreciated. Besides, the cold and the north winds are the ingredients that make those posts be appealing (Lowry, 2017). On Instagram, when posting a picture of the Arctic, users tend to add in the description part the outside temperature, as a way of attracting the audience’s attention due to the extreme cold, and make people know that the Arctic cold is something doable to face. Consequently, it is the harsh climate that gives the pictures a special allure (Saarinen & Varnajot, 2019). Lastly, despite Social Media being the perfect misconception-buster, there is still one thing that might differ from any other type of trips: going to the Arctic might not be for everyone, therefore, the ‘fear of missing out’ might not affect as much as it would happen with other traditional destinations.

2. DESTINATION: THE HIGH ARCTIC AND LONGYEARBYEN

2.1 The High Arctic

According to Hassol (2004), the term ‘Arctic’ derives from the Greek ‘ἀρκτικός’ (Arktikos) which means ‘northern, near the Bear’, referring to the Bear Constellation. It is considered as a region itself where most of it is covered by the waters of the Arctic ocean, and where a small percentage is represented by land. The whole Arctic landmass has three differentiated zones, named the High Arctic, the Low Arctic and the Sub Arctic according to its vegetation and climate (Grønnestad, 2016).

Arctic tourism “has been associated with sentiments of adventure on the edge of the world and unique nature-based experiences” (Lee, Weaver & Prebensen, 2017, p. 4). Indeed, the Arctic is considered to be “one of the last frontier destinations on Earth” (Lee *et al.*, 2017, p. 5). This type of tourism is associated with all tourism-related activities that do happen above the Arctic circle, which is located at the latitude 66°33’ North (Stonehouse & Snyder, 2010; Saarinen & Varnajot, 2019). Viken (2013, p. 41) states that “there is no doubt that tourism in the Arctic is different from tourism in other areas”. The Arctic still represents a place away from mass populations, virgin, unexplored, with unique natural settings. Moreover, its majestic setting, rich fauna, untouched landscapes and the chance of experiencing phenomena such as the Northern Lights, enables this area to be defined as a place of exceptional features. During wintertime, the Arctic is perceived as a place to do snow-related activities, such as hiking, skiing, and snow scooting. However, the climate, costs and the distance to get there, makes this destination neither accessible nor affordable to anyone.

In the 90s, the High Arctic was already experiencing a rapid expansion in tourism, since this region was becoming publicly visible, either due to the effects of global warming or because it was starting to be perceived as a place full of diversity (Kaltenborn & Emmelin, 1993; Saarinen & Varnajot, 2019). In the past, the High Arctic was visited by a reduced target but today, it is awakening the curiosity of a vast quantity of people that are fearless to go (Lee, Weaver & Prebensen, 2017). Decades ago, tourism in this area was more common during summertime, since the midnight sun was the attraction to experience longer days and better weather conditions. However, in the recent years, companies have increased their offers of nature-based activities in the snow. Therefore, due to this growth in the tourism sector, accommodation offers have rapidly increased in the last years. At the same time, chasing the Northern Lights has become a popular motivation for reaching the Far North. This activity means to look for the best place for the most appropriate conditions to spot the Aurora Borealis (Lowry, 2017).

Indeed, it is mainly in the High Arctic where the first signs of the global warming are visible (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2017). Climate change represents today an important issue in tourism,

since this industry is considered one of the main polluting ones (UNWTO and UNEP, 2008). Therefore, the need of observing the flow of tourists in the Arctic and control the rapid growth that tourism is experimenting at these high latitudes, and in this way avoid possible overtourism that could lead to irreversible consequences in terms of damages of the environment (Kuščer & Mihalič, 2019). Some of the current impacts of the climate change concerns the melting of ice-caps and the rise of sea levels, affecting Arctic species, such as polar bears that depend on the ice-caps to hunt and survive (Scott, Hall & Stefan, 2012). Therefore, the need of integrating awareness of the current climate situation and an agenda to propose future actions. In this way, it is possible to build a 'responsustable' tourism industry compromised on implementing responsible attitudes based on a sustainable approach (Mihalič, 2016).

Tourism in the High Arctic should not be seen just from the perspective of economic growth. Sustainable practices should be taken into account by applying regulations and policies so as to establish an equilibrium between the economic benefit of receiving tourists, and the protection of the ecosystem due to human interaction (Mihalič, 2016). As Dolnicar *et al.*, 2019, p. 241) state "tourist behaviour has a critical impact on the environmental sustainability of tourism". Therefore, the need of raising awareness of the importance of educating travellers to be environmentally oriented for the sake of the Arctic. In this way, both locals and tourists could get profit from the positive impacts that tourism has on a destination (Mihalič, Šegota, Knežević Cvelbar & Kuščer, 2016).

Sustainable tourism should be the focus to preserve the fragile Arctic nature which constitutes the setting for unique nature-based activities. The impact that tourism can exert on a destination can have positive or negative effects (Mihalič et al., 2016). Therefore, the need of taking care of both impacts, since, still, tourists aiming to visit the Arctic are "in search for ever-new destinations" (Viken & Jørgensen, 1998, p. 126). Since most of the High Arctic is still an untouched territory, the sense of experiencing a close connection with the nature represents the main motivation for getting a wild adventure. Wilderness is described as a big area where nature is almost unspoiled. This description is associated with the High Arctic where remoteness represents the main feature of its environment (McDonald, Wearing & Ponting, 2009).

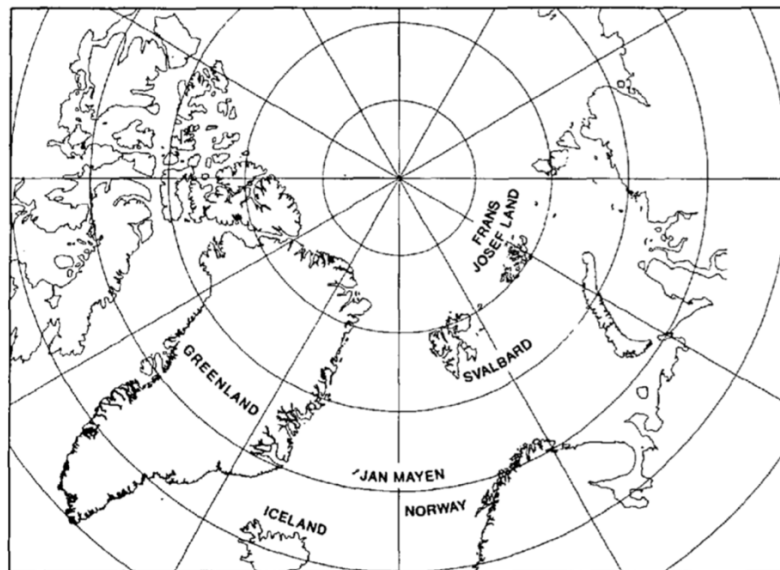
In the last years, tourists and locals have been aware that the Arctic ecosystem is being affected by the global warming. This concern has installed a new term among travel companies that are promoting the High Arctic as a "last-chance tourism" destination, due to the quick deterioration of the Arctic environment. Consequently, it is important to pay attention to what tourists do, in order to diminish environmental consequences. For this reason, the whole Arctic is now being identified as a valuable setting that might cease to exist as such in the short-middle term. Thus, tourism in the Arctic may be counterproductive, since the more tourists, the more vulnerable the Arctic gets. Paradoxically, this feeling of

losing the real essence of the Arctic creates in the tourist the need of getting the most of it, but in this way, it results in spoiling its nature (Scott *et al.*, 2012).

2.2 Longyearbyen, Svalbard

Longyearbyen is the northernmost town in the world, located at 78° North. It is the administrative centre of the archipelago of Svalbard where 2,150 people live, an equal of 0.04 residents per km² (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2017). This Norwegian archipelago is located “halfway between Norway and the North Pole” (Kaltenborn & Emmelin, 1993, p. 41) in the High Arctic, between 74° and 81° North (see Figure 5). Spitsbergen represents the biggest island and Longyearbyen, the largest settlement (Longyearbyen Lokalstyre, 2019). The name Svalbard means “the land of the cold coast”, and as opposite as it might sound, due to the Gulf stream, Svalbard does not have such an extreme weather as other parts of the Arctic do have. Although during wintertime it is common to find temperatures reaching -30° C, it is also true that, when compared with other Arctic places with continental weather, Svalbard’s temperatures are, in average, between 15° - 20° C warmer (Kaltenborn & Emmelin, 1993).

Figure 5: Geographical location of Svalbard



Source: Kaltenborn & Emmelin (1993)

Wilderness is represented by 98% of the whole territory of Svalbard (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2017). Before 1920, Svalbard was considered ‘no man’s land’, since the territory was not under the sovereignty of any nation. After the Svalbard Treaty was signed, Norwegian sovereignty was recognized. Today, Svalbard does not belong to the Schengen Area, meaning that it is a visa-free zone and anyone can live and work there, no matter their

nationality. Today, there are people from 46 countries living on Svalbard. Foreigners represent 25% of the whole population (ibid.). To make matters more interesting, anyone that has already lived seven years on Svalbard, is able to get the Norwegian citizenship. Thus, on the one hand, this open-border policy might be the answer why many other nationalities coexist in this island (Wikipedia, 2019b). However, on the other hand, according to Piechowicz, Wiciak, Czopek & Malecki (2018), Svalbard does not have mild climate to live. This would be the reason why the island is not much populated. Although Svalbard is not Schengen area, it is only via mainland Norway the only accessible way to get there. This means that a visa requirement might apply for entering Norway. Since Svalbard does belong to Norway, it operates under the Norwegian legislation.

The archipelago of Svalbard is located one hour and thirty minutes away from Tromsø, and three hours from the capital of Norway, Oslo. Longyearbyen is only accessible via both cities, either with Scandinavian Airlines or Norwegian. Even though there are 14 flights each day to get to Longyearbyen (Svalbard Buss og Taxi, 2019), still, airline tickets are expensive. Besides, the whole archipelago is 62,000 km², but only 40% of it is land, while the other 60%, is ice. The major island, Spitsbergen, is characterized by having impressive fiords, glaciers and mountain ranges. Moreover, 65% of the whole lands of Svalbard are protected (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2017).

Talking about its past, Longyearbyen has not registered any indigenous population. The first inhabitants were the Dutch by virtue of the conqueror Willem Barentsz who first arrived to Svalbard in 1596 (Duncan, 2003), looking for a Northeast shortcut to China (Viken & Jørgensen, 1998). It was him that gave the name Spitsbergen, meaning 'rugged peaks', to the biggest island on Svalbard. At the beginning of the colonization, in the 17th century, the main interest lied on the exploitation of natural resources (Kaltenborn & Emmelin, 1993), as well as the hunt of species like walrus and the Greenland whale. Then, since those species were starting to be depleted, this activity was abolished, a bit before the beginnings of the 18th century. Since 1973, polar bears and walrus became protected species. This is why polar bear safaris are not allowed on Svalbard (Baldacchino, 2006). Unfortunately, this does not happen with the Svalbard reindeer and the ringed seal, since controlled hunting is still allowed (Kaltenborn & Emmelin, 1993).

In 1901, the American industrialist John Munro Longyear arrived on Svalbard, firstly as a tourist, but also attracted by its coal deposits. Then, coal fields were exploited by the company Arctic coal company, with Longyear as the main investor. It was finally in 1906, after the exploitation of the first mine, when the town was founded as Longyear City, later called Longyearbyen, due to the fact that 'byen' means 'city' in Norwegian. In the middle of the First World War, in 1916, due to a financial adversity, the company was bought by Store Norske Spitsbergen Kulkompani, the one currently operating on Svalbard (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2017). It is important to state that this coal is considered of high quality (Grydehøj, 2014). Today, Longyearbyen has six former coal mines, one running as a

museum (coal mine number 3), and one still in operation, which is coal mine number 7. It is up to this mine where one of the main roads from the centre of the town ends. The other one ends at the airport, about 4 km away from the town.

Even though tourism started more than a 100 years ago, it is also true that it started increasing in the 1970s and 1980s, due to the fact that the Longyearbyen airport opened in 1975 (Kaltenborn & Emmelin, 1993). Before that, only explorers where the ones arriving by ship to encounter these territories. In the present, tourism is part of the three main activities that are expanding, including mining and research. The latter one is due to the presence of the University Centre in Svalbard (UNIS), an institution that since 1993 provides higher education and research, specialized in geology, biology, and geophysics (Grydehøj, 2014; UNIS, 2019b). Nevertheless, the tourism boom started in 1990, when it became a governmental priority. Indeed, from that year, tourism does grow faster than in mainland Norway. In the last decade, most of the hotels were built in Longyearbyen, as well as restaurants, souvenir shops, a small Art Gallery, and museums, such as the Svalbard, the North Pole Expedition and the Coal Mine number 3 Museum, which was inaugurated as such in 2015 (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2017). Today, Longyearbyen has just 14 places to overnight, being four of them hotels, and the rest, either apart-hotels, bed and breakfasts and one hostel (Visit Svalbard, 2019a).

Besides being the airport the main gateway to Svalbard, the majority of the visitors arrive to Longyearbyen by cruise ships, being summertime the peak season (Viken & Jørgensen, 1998). However, those visitors are not counted as tourists, since they do not overnight. According to the interviews conducted, the average length of stay of respondents were four nights, since Longyearbyen still represents an expensive destination to go. Mainland Norwegians represent 65% of the whole number of tourists (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2017). According to some Norwegians interviewed, the Government of Norway is actually fostering the tourism on Svalbard these days. Besides, other tourists' nationalities include people from France, Italy, the United Kingdom and the United States, among others.

All activities on Svalbard are nature-based (Baldacchino, 2006). Most of the tourists that come to Longyearbyen are passionate about outdoor activities. Popular snow-related activities are driving a snowmobile, joining a dog sledding excursion, hunting the Northern Lights, hiking, watching polar bears and crossing glaciers and fiords (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2017). Any of those activities are highly demanding, physically speaking, since the nature setting is exposed to extreme weather (Lindberg & Eide, 2016). However, snowmobiling represents the number one activity. No experience is required, but it is compulsory to bring a driving license to drive one. Still, tourists prefer to have their trips organised by a tour operator (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2017). Day excursions are the most frequent ones taken, as well as the 3-days trips that are run with snowmobile or dog sledding, even though the latter ones are more expensive. The most popular destinations for all type of excursions represent the area of Adventdalen, Tempelfjorden, the east coast, and the Russian towns of

Barentsburg and Pyramiden. Besides, the most visited attraction in the centre of Longyearbyen constitutes the Svalbard Museum, where the history of Svalbard and its mining industry is described as well as its flora and fauna, by displaying some embalmed animals such as a polar bear, foxes and some native birds (ibid.).

Both the nature and the cultural heritage are protected by the Governor of Svalbard, called 'Sysselmannen' in Norwegian, who is also the head of the Police and the one in charge of issuing any kind of permission, such as firearm possession, marriage certificates, visas, passports, registration of cars and snowmobiles. The latter ones are the most popular means of transport, and 70% of the population does have one (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2017). The Governor is also responsible for setting environmental policies (Grydehøj, 2014), establishing new regulations and restrictions on National Parks, as well as leading rescue missions (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2017). Besides, Longyearbyen still represents the hub for expeditions run to the North Pole, since from the airport of Longyearbyen, it is possible to reach the Russian ice camp of Barneo, located at 89° North, close to the geographic North Pole.

One limitation that is still facing Longyearbyen represents the lack of public transportation. There is one private company that runs daily routes from/to the airport. Each time a flight arrives to the airport, the bus is waiting for all the passengers to pick them up. This bus follows a fixed route to every single hotel in Longyearbyen, as well as the other way around, in order to get to the airport. Every hotel has a fixed hour when this bus is waiting for the tourists. Besides this, there is no other public transportation around the town. As regards the wintertime season, this issue means that each person should arrange their own snow scooter, snow track, dog sled, or skis in order to go out of the town. However, since the town of Longyearbyen is quite small, no transportation is needed to walk around.

All people that go out of town should by law carry a rifle, due to the danger of encountering polar bears, since there are more polar bears (approximately 3,000 on the whole archipelago of Svalbard) and snowmobiles (approximately 2,100 registered in 2015) than humans (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2017). There is a road sign located at 1.5 km from the centre of the town that indicates that from that point onwards there might be the presence of polar bears all around Svalbard. Therefore, in the town centre it is common to see people carrying guns or rifles. However, it is not allowed to be armed at any store. For this reason, each shop has a gun safe box to store them for free.

Talking about the facilities, Longyearbyen has one big supermarket, named Svalbardbutikken, a big school providing Primary and Secondary education, a couple of Kindergarten, one bank and post office, several restaurants, pubs and cafes, one big public swimming pool and sport centre, one cinema, a big Library, a small thrift shop and one small hospital (Sykehus) where medical attention can be provided, but no assistance is given to elderly people (Longyearbyen Lokalstyre, 2019). Living in Longyearbyen means to be able

to fend for oneself. This is why the majority of its residents are young people, aged 25 to 49 (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2017). People in need of special assistance, as well as pregnant women in their 8th month, or people with complicated injuries, are sent to mainland Norway. This hospital is still not enough prepared to handle delicate situations. This is the reason why pregnant women are mainly sent to Tromsø in order to deliver their babies.

A peculiarity about Svalbard is that no trees or bushes do grow there. Another fact that makes Longyearbyen an unusual town is, that, since 1950 burials are prohibited. Due to the fact that the soil is permafrost, meaning that it is completely frozen, only the top layer is melted every summer (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2017). Consequently, human bodies would not decompose, since at 1 or 1.5 metres below ground, there is a ranging ground temperature of between -4° and -10° C. However, there is a former cemetery at the slope of a mountain. It was there where samples of the virus of the Spanish influenza have been found. Since 1950 burials are banned (Duncan, 2003) and bodies are sent to mainland Norway in order to be buried or cremated. Ashes, however, could be sent back to Svalbard.

Talking about supply, Svalbard is a duty-free zone. However, it is from mainland Norway where all items come by plane or ship. This is why foodstuff and all kind of supply are expensive, except for alcohol, which is restricted by a quota, and tobacco. Svalbard itself does not produce any kind of food, neither crops nor livestock. However, in 2015, an American man introduced in Longyearbyen the polar permaculture, growing by his own fresh vegetables and eggs as a way of introducing a sustainable circular system to the town (Polar permaculture, 2019). Still, this is produced on a small scale, giving provision to high-demanded hotels. Besides, other local but expensive specialties include whale, seal and reindeer, since hunting is allowed but controlled (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2017). Regarding animals, a peculiarity of Longyearbyen is that cats are forbidden in order to protect the local species of birds. However, dogs are the most common domestic animal in the town, especially the huskies, that are used for dog sledding. Therefore, many dog yards can be found in the outskirts of the town. It is estimated that there are around 770 dogs on Svalbard (ibid.).

Longyearbyen is also known as the hub for hunting Auroras. During wintertime between November 11th until January 30th, it is dark 24 hours. This phenomenon is named 'polar night' and it makes the perfect stage for 'Aurora Borealis' or Northern Lights' watch (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2017). According to UNIS (2019a), since the Auroral oval shifts northern during the day, it increases the chances to see it at the latitudes where Svalbard is located. This attraction makes Longyearbyen be the hub for exploring Svalbard during wintertime. Northern Lights' watch can be experienced between the beginnings of September until the end of March.

Already in the 90s, Viken & Jørgensen (1998, p. 127) stated that "the quality of the tourism experience is closely related to the fact that Svalbard is not overcrowded". Therefore, the

challenge of keeping tourism on a short scale. According to Statistisk sentralbyrå (2017), around 130,000 people visited Svalbard in 2015. Before 2012, numbers were stable between 80,000 and 90,000 tourists annually. However, those numbers changed along the years, since Svalbard is experiencing a high increase of visitors during spring and summertime.

Lastly, it is important to outline that “Svalbard is a destination for people with dreams of the Arctic wild” (Lindberg & Eide, 2016, p. 15). Tourists that visit Svalbard “represent a wide diversity of preferences, activity patterns, motivation, planning, preparation, recreation use history, and skills levels” that look for “broad features or characteristics of the settings such as naturalness, remoteness” (Kaltenborn & Emmelin, 1993, p. 45). “The main selling point for Svalbard as a destination is its pristine, natural environment, located at the edge of the world. No other place so close to one of the poles is so easily accessible” (Baldacchino, 2006, p. 132). Therefore, as it was stated before, it is imperative to protect the environment of Svalbard from the harm of people and the tourism industry, since it is located in one of the most endangered places on Earth (Viken & Jørgensen, 1998).

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Theoretical paradigm

The purpose of this study is to understand which are the needs that drive a tourist to visit Longyearbyen, Svalbard, the High Arctic, and the influence that Social Media exerts on the travel motivation. Therefore, the paradigm selected for this research is the ‘interpretive social sciences paradigm’, which has also been named the ‘constructivist paradigm’, since there are multiple realities of understanding the different motivations that drive tourists to visit the High Arctic (Jennings, 2010).

This study follows a qualitative analysis since the core of the study is to have a deep understanding of the tourists’ motivations, meaning, the content itself, rather than focusing on numbers. As Farrell (2016) affirms, interviews conducted with open-ended questions allow to have a valuable quantity of data with a low quantity of respondents. In addition, the empirical material is gathered at the destination, under normal circumstances, that means, when travellers are participating in recreational activities, or when they are in their spare time. In order to understand the motivations that drive people to visit Longyearbyen, an inductive approach is introduced, assuming that there will be general conclusions from some particular premises (Jennings, 2010). To implement this, the researcher will be immersed as a tourist in Longyearbyen for three weeks, in order to understand and interpret tourists’ behaviour originated by their motivations, the goal of this study. This ‘emic perspective’ gives the best lens to understand from the tourists’ perspective the driving force that makes them wish to visit this destination (ibid.)

As the paradigm implies, it is a subjective process, since it is based on the researcher's personal observation and the interaction with different groups of tourists at the destination, either face-to-face or via Instagram. This qualitative methodology includes tourists' observation and semi-structured interviews in order to understand the travel motivations from a personal point of view of the people (Kothari, 2004). All the perspectives are equally taken into consideration, including the exceptions. Nevertheless, it has to be considered that studying a sample does not mean that it will represent a whole population, since the results are intrinsically related to those tourists interviewed. The outcome of this study will be text-based conveyed, and not translated in terms of numbers (Jennings, 2010).

3.2 The research design

The research design involves the gathering of data in order to prepare a framework to work on the analysis that leads to the study of the research problem (Kothari, 2004). In an interpretive social sciences paradigm, since different realities are analysed, the research design should let the researcher give a certain scope of action in order to get deep into the different aspects for a complete analysis of the phenomenon (Jennings, 2010, Kothari, 2004). Hence, basic questions will be analysed, such as, what kind of information is needed, and how that information is going to be obtained. As a result, qualitative analysis will provide the deepest knowledge of the insights, motivations and expectations of the tourists.

For this reason, the researcher stayed in Longyearbyen between February 16th and March 5th, 2019, after the dark season ended, which occurs on January 30th. This destination is chosen with the aim of visiting what represents to be the northernmost town in the world, located at 78° North, and experience 'in situ' what brings people to visit this place. The researcher chose to stay at a private room at an Airbnb house, since prices at hotels were really high, and there was a high accommodation demand and a low supply. At the same time, it represented a way of getting in touch with the local host and some other tourists that were staying at the same place.

It is important to emphasize that the destination's population of 2,100 inhabitants and the small size of the town (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2017), makes the exploratory research quite simple. This means that, in order to explore the travel motivation to visit this destination, tourists are easily spotted in the centre of the town. Longyearbyen has the shape of an inverted cross, where the two main roads constitute the main arteries of the town. Hence, most of the tourists are encountered in the main pedestrian road, where most of the accommodation offers are located as well as some souvenir shops and one supermarket. On the other hand, due to the fact that this period of the year is characterized by cold temperatures (between -20° and -30° C), not many locals are on the streets, and those that are doing outdoor activities, are mainly tourists.

Accordingly, once the tourists are asked if they have some free time, in-depth interviews are conducted in order to gather empirical material. These interviews represent the main source for the analysis of this study. In order to have a deeper understanding of the tourists' motivations and the influence of Social Media, data is collected through different methods, meaning, not only through face-to-face interviews but also via Instagram. In this way, it is possible to implement the technique of triangulation in order to have a deeper appreciation of the phenomenon (Jennings, 2010).

All stages of the research design are mostly conducted at the same time. The first stage of the exploratory research involves getting to know Longyearbyen through secondary data. This means, to investigate the location of the destination, how to get there, airline tickets, the Arctic weather, how to dress properly for the wintertime, visa restrictions, attractions and outdoor activities, accommodation options and particularities of the place. This is helpful to have an overall knowledge of the destination that is studied, as well as to identify the possible motivations that might drive the tourists to visit this place. At the same time, personal interaction on Social Media, such as Instagram and Facebook, help to have an idea of the interests of tourists that are currently at the destination. By following hashtags related to the name of the place, it enables to have the news feed updated with the current posts shared by other tourists in real time.

The second phase has to do with the exploration on-site, in order to perceive Longyearbyen's environment and atmosphere created by the locals, as well as its surrounding nature and the recreational activities that are offered there. Exploratory research also implicates to pay attention when different languages are spoken. This exploration also means a personal approach with the Airbnb host, a key person for consultation, since she has been living in Longyearbyen since 2001, and has experienced all the changes that took place in the town. Locals represent a valid source when investigating the town. Therefore, for the stage of the exploratory research, notes are taken along some informal conversations with 10 people that are living and providing tourism services in Longyearbyen, as well as a Norwegian professor that teaches annually at UNIS, the University Centre in Svalbard (See Appendix 1, Table 3).

The third stage involves participating in some excursions as a tourist in order to discover what Longyearbyen has to offer as a tourism destination. Those include: a sightseeing tour by bus around the town and the surroundings of Longyearbyen, a night tour to hunt the Northern Lights, which was unfortunately not successful, two field trips arranged by the University Centre in Svalbard (UNIS), being the first one to Kjell Henriksen Observatory (KHO), a Northern Lights Observatory, and the second one, to the Svalbard Satellite Station (SvalSat), a satellite ground station, that, together with the one located in Antarctica, they are the only two ones receiving information from both polar orbits (Aerospace technology, 2019). Then, a visit to the Svalbard Museum, where the history of Longyearbyen is explained, as well as a visit to the North Pole Expedition Museum, where the history of past expeditions to Svalbard is detailed. Also, a group excursion made to the coal mine number

3, that was transformed into a museum, a snow cat activity heading to an ice cave in the mountain, a snowmobile excursion, and finally, a night excursion made by car to the valley with the Airbnb host, where the Northern Lights were successfully spotted.

The aim of each activity already mentioned is to experience being a local. On the one hand, by interacting with the Airbnb host, the Norwegian professor and classmates of the course 'The Stormy Sun and the Northern Lights' run by the University Centre in Svalbard, it gives the opportunity of being immersed into the culture, nature and social bonds of the people living there. On the other hand, all the excursions enable to do the typical activities that average tourists do in Longyearbyen. Thus, at every excursion, general questions are made to the guides as a way of having a background of the tourists' nationalities and their motivation to participate in these activities. These talks, as shown in Appendix 1, Table 3, give an overall view of the tourism in Longyearbyen from the point of view of the local tourism workers. Besides, an e-mail is sent to Visit Svalbard, the Destination Marketing Organization, in order to ask for the most recent statistics of arrivals, so as to be informed about tourists' nationalities that visited Longyearbyen in 2018, as it is shown in Appendix 2.

The fourth stage of the research design has to do with the in-depth research, since it is needed to learn in depth the inner drive or travel motivations of the tourists, the focus of the study. Therefore, a scheme of work is planned in order to think about the best places and situations where travellers could be addressed to conduct face-to-face semi-structured interviews with some open-ended questions. In this way, the interviews are conducted in a more relaxing atmosphere and thus, it enables people to talk openly about their impressions. Moreover, tourists represent the main target of the study since it is their personal evidence the main source for gathering empirical material. Therefore, the interview questions are accurately prepared in order to think about how many questions would be enough to complete the research of travel motivations and the influence of Social Media. At the same time, it is important to not make interviews long, since otherwise, tourists could be bored and tired, considering that the chosen places for conducting them are either at the excursions made or at the souvenir shops, hotel receptions or at the only supermarket in town, which in fact represents the busiest place in town. Empirical material is collected from 50 groups of tourists as it is shown in Appendix 3, that are either travelling as solo travellers, as a couple, as a family, or with friends.

At the beginning, interviews are recorded, with the tourists' permission, by using a mobile-phone application. However, along the interviews conducted, it is perceived that the use of a device makes the situation be intimidating for both the interviewer and the interviewees. For this reason, after conducting a couple, interviews are stopped to be recorded and notes are taken, which shows to give better results. Therefore, the rest of the interviews are done asking the same questions, but as a rather informal and pleasant dialogue, which also includes tourists' anecdotes, laughs and a more personalized approach. Each of these

interviews have a duration of approximately between five and ten minutes. This satisfactory way also helps the researcher to have a “focus on the bigger picture” (Gibbs, 2007a, p. 11) and to not be stuck at every single detail provided, since details do not represent the essence of the analysis.

The following Table 1 illustrates the interview questions. Transcriptions of those interviews are shown in Appendix 4, that presents tables displaying the 28 interviews conducted face-to-face to 62 tourists that are either travelling alone, or as a couple, with family members or friends. In order to not make people feel intimidated, names of the participants are not asked. Interviews are mainly conducted in English, with the exception of two, that are conducted in Spanish. Progressively, interviews get smoother and more complete, since new questions start emerging as a result of discovering new topics of interest. However, not all open-questions are asked to everyone. According to their mood of talking, some might be avoided.

Table 1: The in-depth interview questions made to tourists in Longyearbyen

0. Place
1. Travelling with whom
2. Nationality
3. Age
4. Profession
5. Month of the visit
6. Length of stay in Longyearbyen
7. How did you know about Longyearbyen for the first time?
8. How did you imagine Longyearbyen before knowing about this place?
9. Why did you choose to come here instead of going to a heavenly beach in the Caribbean, for example?
10. What has attracted you the most to come to visit Longyearbyen?
11. What was the main aim of this trip in relation to yourself?
12. Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip?
13. Did your perception of Longyearbyen change after seeing pictures or videos posted on Social Media?
14. Did you have any fears and worries before coming here?
15. What kind of activities are you doing here?
16. Would you consider Longyearbyen the highlight of your trip?
17. Does your trip include any other destination?
18. Why did you choose February to come to visit Longyearbyen?

Source: own illustration

Following the stages of this research design, it comes the fifth and last one, that has to do with Social Media platforms, especially Instagram. This stage needs much preparation

beforehand. For this reason, during the month of January 2019, several hashtags on Instagram were followed as a way to pay attention to what other users were posting about their trips to Longyearbyen. Those hashtags were the following ones: #longyearbyen, #svalbardnorway #svalbardandjanmayen, #closetothepole, #discoversvalbard, #mittsvalbard, #mysvalbard, #spitsbergen, #darkseason, #visitsvalbard, #78degreesnorth, #svalbardlife, #longyearbyenairport, #unisvalbard, #svalbard. Accordingly, many pictures and videos started to appear on the news feed of Instagram, and a list of the name of those users was made, in order to contact them. That list includes 22 groups of tourists that were contacted in order to conduct semi-structured interviews via private message, as it is shown in Appendix 5. Those interviews were shorter, since getting information from random people via a Social Media platform is often harder than through a face-to-face conversation. As well, the period when tourists were contacted was from the beginnings of March to mid-April 2019, meaning, until it reached the point of having data saturation and nothing new could be obtained from those interviews. Finally, both types of interviews conducted were transcribed and ordered from #T1 to #T50 (where “T” does mean tourists), in the chronological time the participants were interviewed. Table 2 shows a sum-up of the stages of the research design already described.

Table 2: The research design stages

Exploratory research		In-depth research		
First stage	Second stage	Third stage	Fourth stage	Fifth stage
Get to know the place through secondary data and hashtags on Social Media	Exploration of Longyearbyen, through the eyes of local workers	Participation in tourist activities. Talks with local tourism workers	Collection of empirical material through semi-structured interviews conducted face-to-face	Follow destination’s hashtags on Instagram, contact users and interview them via private message

Source: own illustration

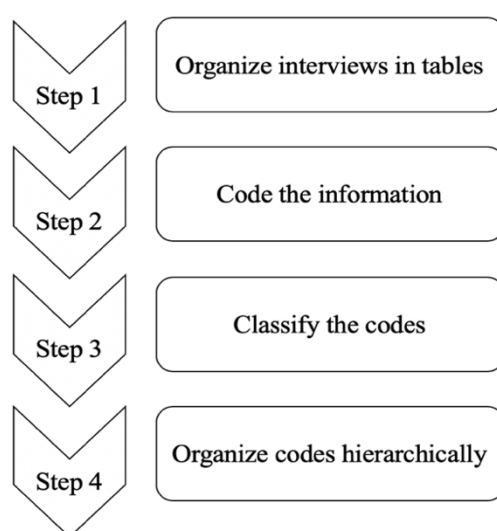
3.3 Empirical material analysis

In this phase, exploratory and in-depth interviews are examined. Once the period of collecting empirical material is done, meaning that it has reached a saturation, the first step involves organizing all interviews in tables following the same structure of questions (See Appendix 4 & 5), in order to present the data in a neat way. The second step involves coding as a way of organizing the information. This represents the initial phase of analysing the

empirical material in order to identify patterns and give some explanations to what represents the aim of the study (Gibbs, 2007b). Each interview is analysed in order to detect key words that will help to create categories within the analysis of motivations. Then, the third step includes classifying the codes, and finally, the fourth step requires a hierarchy of the data according to the topics already introduced in the literature review, as it is shown in Figure 6.

This analysis of the data involves going back and forward on each of the interviews presented on the Appendices. This mechanism will give the richness of the coding process and the hierarchy of information. Interviews conducted face-to-face are analysed in the same way as those made by private message on Instagram. The aim of both methods of interviewing still represent analysing the travel motivations for visiting Longyearbyen and the influence of Social Media in this matter.

Figure 6: Sequence of how empirical material is analysed



Source: own illustration

4. ANALYSIS

This chapter presents the results of the exploratory conversations with local workers (See Appendix 1, Table 3) about their insights concerning tourism in Longyearbyen. It follows the statistics of the arrivals, overnights and nationalities of tourists that visited Longyearbyen between the period of 2008 and 2018 (see Appendix 2). Finally, the results of the in-depth interviews conducted face-to-face are presented (See Appendix 4) as well as those conducted via Instagram (See Appendix 5). Both sum up the 50 interviews conducted to solo travellers, couples, families and tourists that are travelling with friends. Consequently, Appendix 3, Table 7 illustrates a summary table of all participants.

Findings are presented following a detailed analysis according to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, to further study the travel career ladder of the interviewees by applying the Pearce's model. It follows Crompton's push and pull motivational theory and Dann's travel motives concerning the needs that push travellers to be attracted by the destination's features, as well as the analysis of expectations according to Gnoth's study. Moreover, misconceptions are taken into account in order to see how they impact in the travel motivation to visit Longyearbyen. Finally, there is a deep analysis of the influence exerted by Social Media, that is, 'the fear of missing out' as well as its positive role by inspiring people, making them discover new features about Longyearbyen and by demystifying misconceptions about the Arctic.

4.1 Analysis of the tourism industry in Longyearbyen from the perspective of local tourism workers

At present, Longyearbyen represents a destination not only intended for explorers and expeditioners, but also, for adventure seekers and average tourists that want to have a close encounter with the High Arctic (Kaltenborn & Emmelin, 1993). However, Longyearbyen is a destination that is still not known by many, since the Far North is considered by many as an uninhabited and unreachable place (Lee, Weaver & Prebensen, 2017). According to the interviews conducted, on the one hand, Svalbard is generally perceived as a cold place, the territory of polar bears and huge ice caps. On the other hand, for those already familiar with the place, Longyearbyen represents more than this, since it is nowadays a town where services, facilities and suppliers are administered as a way of creating a sense of community in the town, where everything is at short distance from the resident's houses in the town.

From the top three activities on Svalbard, besides mining and researching, since the 90s tourism has represented a growing sector (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2017). The locals are the ones experiencing this phenomenon lately, since the main indicator that Longyearbyen is changing, is represented by the contrast between the past and the present, both in the economic, tourism and environmental sense. As a point of reference, until 2010 Longyearbyen had only two hotels in town. Nowadays, the offer extends to 14 (Visit Svalbard, 2019a). Longyearbyen is still the hub for exploring the archipelago of Svalbard. This is because it is the most populated town and the only one providing the best infrastructure and services.

Longyearbyen has experienced lots of changes in the last decade. The most impressive and visible one is attributed to climate change, considering that ten years ago, ice caps used to reach the shore of the fiord right in front of the heart of the town, and nowadays, it has retreated, and water flows normally. However, Longyearbyen still represents a peaceful place to live, according to the Airbnb host's perspective, that has lived in this town since

2001 (See Appendix 1, Table 3, row 1 for more information). She hopes that in the next upcoming years, tourism will not threaten the ecosystem of the place. The respect for others still represents an important matter among people in this town. She also shares that almost none crimes and thefts have been registered in the town, and furthermore, as a sign of politeness, people take their shoes off when entering to a public building or a private house, a tradition kept from the coal miners when they arrived home dirty.

Bearing in mind the perspective of the Airbnb host, Longyearbyen is a place aimed for tough people that are eager to earn some money. It does not represent a place to live a whole life. Most of the people have an experience of between seven to ten years living there, they make some money and go back to mainland Norway. However, there are still some couples that haven been living there for about 40 years. Those are tranquillity and solitude seekers, that are in love with the dark season and by being connected with the nature, and that also appreciate the sense of community that has been built in the town. Freezing temperatures do not represent much trouble, since the pumps that are built above the permafrost soil, are permanently heated, and the main electric station does provide electricity and hot water to the whole town. In addition, the electric station provides wires to connect the cars parked outside to a power system that makes the ventilation of the car prevent the car's engine being frozen.

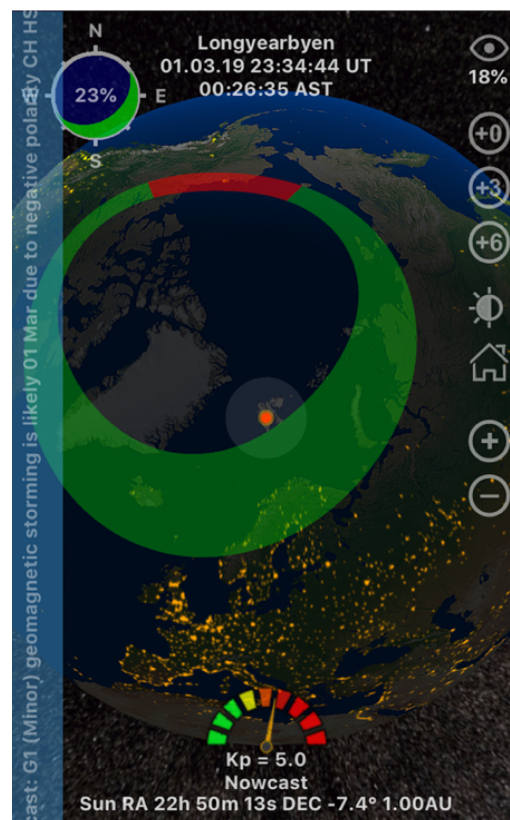
In addition, a receptionist from a four-star hotel, the 'Mary-Ann's Polarrigg', (See Appendix 1, Table 3, row 2), shares that, in the last years, a couple of start-ups emerged in Longyearbyen as a way of countering the 'monopoly' imposed by Hurtigruten, the main and biggest tourism company that provides services on Svalbard and mainland Norway. Moreover, a bus driver from the company 'Svalbard Buss og Taxi AS' (See Appendix 1, Table 3, row 3), makes emphasis on the peculiarities that attract tourists to visit this archipelago, like the chance of having a close encounter with polar bears. However, those tourists ignore the danger that this action implies. Besides, the bus driver surprises the tourists by showing them a small cemetery that is not operational since 1950, when burials started to be banned, due to the fact that bodies do not decompose because of the cold. Furthermore, he shares that Longyearbyen, as small as it might represent as a town, does have forty people working in its Town Hall. While he was explaining about the history of the town, he encourages tourists to go to live and work in Longyearbyen, with the condition of being able to accept that there are three months of total darkness. Travellers that join this tour around the town, seem to get surprised by how well organized and modern the town is, since this destination, although it is geographically isolated, it is at the same level of any other modern and developed city around the world.

The Northern Lights represent an important phenomenon in Longyearbyen. The season of Polar Nights (dark season) gives the opportunity of experiencing dayside Auroras, since during wintertime it is dark 24 hours. Therefore, the researcher participates at a course run by the University Centre in Svalbard (UNIS), in order to get familiar with this phenomenon

(See Appendix 1, Table 3, row 4). The lecturer, Prof. Dr. Pål Brekke, a Norwegian professor specialized in solar physics and astrophysics, introduces myths and beliefs of this phenomenon, as well as scientific characteristics and its relationship with the sun. He shares that Northern Norway represents one of the best locations to see the Aurora Borealis. Moreover, it is nowadays a hub for chasing them, since all that area of Norway has good infrastructure and facilities that allow tourists to have a quality experience. In this regard, Longyearbyen attracts tourists in the dark season, when they can have better chances of seeing this phenomenon.

According to Brekke (2019), Auroras can be seen from 1,000 to 1,300 km away from the Magnetic Pole, which is slightly moving and at the same time is not aligned with the Geographical Pole. Svalbard is located further closer to the North Pole than the rest of mainland Scandinavia, and therefore, it is only during the dark season when Auroras do appear more often during the day, when the Aurora oval goes northern. During the night, there are better chances to chase this phenomenon at the north of Scandinavia (See Figure 7), especially at places like Tromsø, mainland Norway, located at the latitude 68° N. This latter destination has gained popularity in the last years for being the best place to chase the Northern Lights. In regard to this matter, the KP index represents the scale for measuring the intensity of an Aurora. It goes from 0 to 9, where 9 is the strongest level of intensity.

Figure 7: Aurora oval over Northern Scandinavia. March 1st, 2019 at 00.26. KP index: 5



Source: Kjell Henriksen Observatory, 2019

In addition, according to the two guides of two different outdoor excursions held in Longyearbyen (See Appendix 1, Table 3, row 7 & 9), both of them put emphasis on how climate change is affecting the whole Arctic, its ice caps, flora and fauna. It is common to see that most of the workers have a degree in Geology, Oceanography or Biology, and might have also been students at the University Centre in Svalbard, that later worked as seasonal workers and decided to stay longer. Moreover, this also represents the case of the bus driver of 'Arctic tapas', a company providing excursions to hunt the Northern Lights (See Appendix 1, Table 3, row 5). On an informal conversation, he shares his experience by telling that he arrived to Svalbard and never thought he would stay long. Nowadays, he runs his own business in permaculture, growing fresh food for Longyearbyen.

Finally, a tour guide of the coal mine number 3 Museum gives his insight of how it is to be a coal miner. This tour is run by the current company that operates the coal mine number 7, named 'Store Norske Spitsbergen Kulkompani' (See Appendix 1, Table 3, row 8). All along the visit, this former mine creates the atmosphere of being a miner, since they provide the typical miners' suits and they give the opportunity to go deep in the mine. It is important to bear in mind that mining still represents an important activity in the archipelago of Svalbard, since coal is used to power the energy station of Longyearbyen.

'Visit Svalbard', the Destination Marketing Organization, represents the main point of reference when researching for information about Svalbard (See Appendix 1, Table 3, row 6, and Appendix 2, Figure 8 & 9). According to their statistics (See Appendix 2, Table 4), from 2008 to 2018, Longyearbyen has increased its overnights by 70%, from having 92,000 in total in 2008 to 156,241 in 2018, excluding camping sites. The peak months are June, July and August, when it is summertime and it is the season of the midnight sun, meaning, that there is light 24 hours a day. However, it is interesting to notice that the months of March and April also show a significant number of overnights. According to Visit Svalbard (2019b) and the interviews conducted at the destination, this increase of tourism during those months, is attributed to the fact that it is the end of the Polar Nights, and the sun is rising again above the horizon, painting the landscape with pink and pastel colours. Moreover, during March and April, there are still chances of seeing the Northern Lights.

Paying attention to the quantity of guest arrivals, Longyearbyen received 41,037 tourists in 2008, and 72,544 in 2018. This represents an increase of 76% in arrivals between both terms (See Appendix 2, Table 5). Since 2011, an average increase of between 3% to 20% is experienced every year, where 2013 and 2015 are marked as the highest ones in demand of tourists, near 20% more compared to their previous years, respectively. In any case, tourism is expressed as being in high demand. September to February are clearly marked as the months of lowest arrivals, and April, June, July and August, the peak months. Both years, 2009 and 2010, are marked as the lowest ones in demand. At the present, according to the statistics, tourism in Longyearbyen is still growing, and 2018 is marked as the peak year.

However, since statistics in Longyearbyen are not the focus of the study, this is merely illustrative of how tourism is doing at the destination (Visit Svalbard, 2019b).

When analysing tourists' nationalities that visited Longyearbyen (See Appendix 2, Table 6), even though statistics are just showing a partial analysis of the number of arrivals according to nationalities during the period January - May 2017/2018, it can be discerned that tourists were mainly coming from European countries, being Norway on top of the list. Other European countries include Sweden, Germany, the United Kingdom, France, the Netherlands, Italy, Denmark, Switzerland, Poland, Spain, Belgium and Finland. In addition, tourists from non-European countries came from the United States, Russia, China and Australia. Moreover, in 2018, Swiss tourists increased by 86% compared to 2017, as well as China, that had an increase of tourists of 86% with respect to the previous year. However, Russian tourists decreased by 86% between 2017 and 2018. Other nationalities experience more or less similar percentage of growth between both years already analysed (Visit Svalbard, 2019b). Finally, comparing Visit Svalbard's statistics to the interviews conducted at the destination, most of the nationalities do coincide, with the difference that the interviews show that there are also tourists from other nationalities that visit Longyearbyen, such as from Brazil, India, Greece, Alaska, Ireland, Argentina, Turkey, Ukraine and Thailand. However, people from Norway, Switzerland, the United States, Italy, the United Kingdom and France, were the most ones found at this destination (See Appendix 3, Table 7).

4.2 Analysis of the respondents' profile

According to respondents, Longyearbyen represents an expensive destination. Norway and all Scandinavia has always been perceived as expensive countries, mainly due to its strong economy and currencies (Chitty, 2018). Svalbard is not the exception. Therefore, trips are planned well in advance. This destination does not represent a last-minute opportunity, and reasons to visit this place do have, most of the times, coherence and a good argumentation.

The interviews conducted shows that Svalbard is intended for a specific niche travel market, since reaching the northernmost part of the world demands effort and money. In addition, the climate of the Arctic makes the niche be even smaller, since Longyearbyen has from the starting point the pre-condition of being far away, expensive and cold. As it is perceived in the in-depth interviews, this destination attracts people that have a good economic position. It is important to remind that airline tickets, accommodation and even food is expensive. There are not many flight deals, since Scandinavian Airlines and Norwegian are the only two airlines that arrive to Longyearbyen. Talking about accommodation, most of the hotels are more expensive when compared with other Nordic destinations (Visit Svalbard, 2019a).

Moreover, at the beginning of the interviews conducted face-to-face, the tourists' profession is asked. Although this is not the main focus of the study, it gives an interesting background about the target that can afford a trip to Svalbard. As it can be observed in the interviews (See Appendix 4), most of the respondents do have skilled employments, where most of those jobs require a degree in order to be qualified. The list of professions include engineering (biomedical, chemical and mechanical), accounting, economic & sales sector (banker, accountant, economist, auditor, consultant, sales department), tourism & service sector (travel agent, hotel receptionist, wedding planner, pastry chef), design sector (web developer, graphic designer, photographer), sports (personal trainer, scuba diver instructor), educational and scientific sector (teacher, marine biologist, space physician and Master student), and finally, the health care sector, such as nurse and pharmacist.

The list of professions shows that Longyearbyen is a destination for people that have qualified works. No groups of Bachelor students are found, only just a couple of Master students. Besides, since Longyearbyen is nowadays a town that has high quality services in the hospitality industry, this destination is not aimed for low budget travellers. In addition, all excursions must be accompanied with a local guide, and excursions are costly, since it involves transportation, and activities do require special equipment. Therefore, it is not a destination for self-exploring, because of the risk of avalanches, crevasses and polar bears in the way.

Concerning all the interviews conducted, respondents are chronologically ordered in tables from #T1 to #T50 as it is shown in Appendix 4, where the letter "T" is used for abbreviating the word 'tourists'. In order to give some examples to describe what is being analysed, some sentences stated by the participants are extracted from the interviews and expressed in the past tense.

Following the analysis of the economic situation of the participants, #T19, a French family, expressed that they had to save a lot of money before heading to Longyearbyen, since this destination represented one of the most expensive places they have been to. Only one hostel is found in the whole town, named 'Gjestehuset 102', and still, when compared with other parts of the world, their prices are much more expensive. Besides, #T21, a solo traveller in her mid-30s, emphasized that she invested a lot of money for her trip. However, generally speaking, the word 'money' or 'expensive' did not show up so often. Moreover, all respondents have shown to be in good shape and properly dressed meaning that they had access to afford winter waterproof cloth proper for dealing the extreme weather.

Paying attention to whom respondents are travelling with, on the one hand, couples and solo travellers represent the majority of the participants. Out of the total of 50 interviews, couples represent 36% of the interviewees, where the vast majority range from the mid-20s to mid-40s. Regarding solo travellers, they represent 34% of the participants, a high percentage when analysing the travel market of Longyearbyen. All of them are young people in their

30s. Furthermore, it seems as if most of the solo travellers are represented by those interviewed via private message on Instagram. In other words, solo travellers represent 63% of the tourists interviewed via Instagram, that is, 22 interviews out of 50, and 13% of those interviewed face-to-face, meaning, 28 interviews out of 50. Nevertheless, those interviewed via Instagram are not certainly representative of the sample of solo travellers, since tourists were not asked with whom they were travelling, but this was deduced in the way how they wrote in first-person singular. On the other hand, 14% are families composed of three or four members, and friends or workmates, being 16% of the interviewees, bearing in mind all the interviews. Respondents' ages range from 5 to 60 years old, but the majority range from mid-20s to mid-40s.

Talking about families, there are those that are concerned about facing the Arctic with their children or seniors, and others that are not. For example, #T9, a family of four coming from Oslo, Norway, emphasized that they wanted to do something different as a family, and therefore, Longyearbyen represented a way of seeing unique examples of animals and to have the chance of chasing the Northern Lights. Although they are Norwegians, the cold did represent a fact to pay attention to, and during the tour of the Northern Light, where the interview was conducted, the youngest son had to wait inside the bus, since he was feeling cold at that moment. In addition, #T49, a tourist from China, stated that, before the trip, she already had concerns regarding the cold, considering that her mom is getting old and the children are still young. However, they decided to take this trip to Longyearbyen.

Nonetheless, most of the participants that were travelling with their family members, did not have major concerns as regards the destination's features. Moreover, they took advantage of the peculiarities of the place. For example, #T26, a family of four, coming from Belgium, expressed that they chose Longyearbyen as a destination since it represented an opportunity to broaden their minds. #T23 expressed that they wanted to have a nice quality time as a family, and Longyearbyen represented an opportunity of bringing the family so up north. #T10, a family of four from mainland Norway, had the intention of reaching Longyearbyen as a way of enjoying a family trip where different things can be seen, compared to the south of Norway.

However, some parents were worried about being so far away from their children. That was the case of #T22, a couple in their mid-30s from Oslo, Norway, that shared their concern of leaving their six month's old daughter in mainland Norway. In addition, this family expressed that they did not venture that much by joining adventure activities, due to the fact of being conscious that they are parents of two little kids. Something similar happened with #T13, a couple from Brazil, since Svalbard represented a remote and unknown place for their relatives back in Brazil. Likewise, #T5, a couple in their mid-30s from the Netherlands, admitted that one of their fears regarding their trip to Longyearbyen, was leaving their kids at home, and being in a place so up north.

4.3 Analysis of the travel motivation to visit Longyearbyen

4.3.1 Analysis of the travel motivation by applying Maslow's hierarchy of needs

According to the e-mail response of Visit Svalbard (See Appendix 2, Figure 9), tourists that visit this archipelago are motivated by its nature, wilderness and by experiencing life at 78° North. This statement represents the starting point of a deep analysis of what constitutes the main focus of this study. For this reason, February and March are the two months chosen for observing, interviewing and researching on the travel motivations to visit the northernmost town in the world. Although the analysis of these two months does not portray the whole year, considering that motivations do vary from wintertime to summertime, it represents 17% of the whole number of tourists that visited Longyearbyen in 2018 (See Appendix 2, Table 5). Therefore, it is a point of reference for studying both months of the current year, 2019. Moreover, February 2018 represented 9% of the arrivals, and March 2018, 11%. In the same year, by comparison, nearly 12% of the whole arrivals occurred in July, the peak month. However, this percentage does not differ much from February and March, the focus of this study.

In order to analyse the tourists' travel motivation to visit Longyearbyen, along the interviews conducted, five questions are the key to identify Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Although they are rather similar among them, it represents a way of inspiring tourists to talk and get as much information as possible:

1. What has attracted you the most to come to visit Longyearbyen?
2. Why did you choose to come here instead of going to a heavenly beach in the Caribbean, for example?
3. What were your main motivations of this trip?
4. What was the main aim of this trip in relation to yourself?
5. Why did you choose February (or March) to come to visit Longyearbyen?

Maslow's theory of hierarchy of needs is used as a way of discovering what brings people to visit Longyearbyen, according to their needs. Consequently, the analysis is done following each level of the Maslow's theory. To start with, the first level corresponds to the 'physiological needs', meaning, the need of water and food, resting, clothing, having a shelter and staying warm, that is to say, the basis for living (Taormina & Gao, 2013).

Along the in-depth interviews conducted, there is the concern of dealing with the cold. It can be perceived that one of the main needs of humans, staying warm, is clearly threatened when travelling to the Arctic. Staying warm is also translated by having the proper cloth. Travelling to the High Arctic during wintertime demands being properly dressed. As said before, when respondents were asked about their fears and worries about visiting Longyearbyen, 26% of all interviewees shared their concern about the cold, like #T3, that described that, due to the fact that they were from Milan, Italy, they have never experienced

that kind of cold before, and therefore, they were worried about not having enough cloth for dealing with the Arctic winter. Then, #T4, two friends from the United States, emphasized that according to what they have heard, frostbites did represent a concern at the time of choosing this destination. Besides, #T7, another couple from the United States, put special attention by saying that they have never experienced those Arctic temperatures at home.

However, sometimes, the cold constitutes one of the attractiveness of the High Arctic. Apart from being a problem for a couple of participants, others felt attracted by it, as #T16 mentioned, by saying that since they were from Greece, they liked to experience the opposite weather as they usually have. Furthermore, #T1, a couple from Switzerland, felt attracted by the extreme winter. Similarly, #T10 and #T22, a family of four from south of Norway and a couple from Oslo, both wanted to experience a real or ‘fairy-tale’ winter, same wish that also had #T23, #T26, #T43, from Spain, Belgium, and Sweden, respectively. Since tourists’ nationalities are different in terms of climate, no relationship can be established regarding this preference.

When paying attention to the ‘food’, another physiological need, the Arctic does not really represent a destination for fulfilling this need. As an example, #T45, a solo traveller from mainland Norway, emphasized that food in Longyearbyen’s restaurants was fantastic, since this town has the best menus and the most skilled chefs from around the world. Also, as a part of the outdoor activities undertaken, both #T16, #T18, #T25, #T28 did have a typical Arctic dinner at a trapper’s station, a tent made at a dog yard where the huskies live, the ones used for the dog sledding excursions. Those trapper’s stations serve typical Arctic Delicatessen, such as seal and reindeer meat. As a way of setting a reference, food represented just 10% of the respondents’ motivation to visit Longyearbyen.

Besides, at the interviews, it was not asked where tourists were staying, since nearly all hotels in Longyearbyen are ranked as 4-star hotels, and prices are very similar among them. In fact, there is only one hostel in the whole town. As it was observed from TripAdvisor’s guests’ pictures, hotels do put a lot of attention when describing its features by ensuring relaxation, comfort, and nice views from the hotel’s restaurants and rooms. Indeed, Longyearbyen offers outstanding landscapes. Therefore, hotel locations are close to the fiord or in front of the mountains.

Still talking about relaxation, indeed, it represents an important matter for respondents. As an example, #T5, a couple from Netherlands, expressed that they came to Longyearbyen with the purpose of having some relaxing days, away from the stress of the city. Similarly, #T15, another couple from the United Kingdom, wanted to relax at a ‘not crowded’ and ‘not busy’ place, and to be far away from a big town. #T22, a couple from Oslo, wanted to disconnect from the mess of a capital city, and #T26, a family of four living in Belgium, they wanted to connect themselves with the Arctic nature by joining adventure activities.

Outdoor attractions in Longyearbyen do represent another way of relaxation. Therefore, along the interviews conducted face-to-face, it is asked the kind of activities undertaken during the tourists' stay. It emerges that for 64% of the interviewees, dog sledding is part of their activities. However, this question is not asked to those tourists interviewed via Instagram, since the aim by doing research through that platform, is to have a more holistic point of view. Besides, chasing the Northern Lights represents another common activity as well as snowmobile excursions or visiting ice caves, undertaken by 71%, 50% and 25% of the interviewees, respectively. Other activities include hiking into the mountains, doing cross-country skiing, visiting either the Svalbard or North Pole Expedition Museum, having a typical Arctic dinner, visiting a coal mine, or just walking around the city town, visiting the church, some souvenir shops, or doing a boat excursion, an activity that is only possible to do from the beginnings of March, when ice caps start melting, and it is possible to tie the boat up at the dock.

Indeed, changing the physical surroundings is a powerful tool to change the inner state and relax. By having this physiological need fulfilled, the second level of Maslow's hierarchy of needs shows up, as a way of reaching the top levels, a natural behaviour of human beings. Therefore, the 'safety needs' are the ones that urges for being protected from harm. The destination has to ensure stability, talking about peace, and a more or less stable political and economic situation. On this regard, Longyearbyen is known as a top safe destination. According to locals, robberies do slightly occur, and every shop and public building has a section of 'lost and found' which people respect. Besides, any important loss is reported at the main Facebook page of Longyearbyen, named 'Ros and info Longyearbyen'. Politically and economically speaking, since the archipelago of Svalbard does belong to Norway, it has a high standard of living. The only threat is represented by polar bears when getting away from the town. Although every local does carry a rifle for self-defence, no murders have been reported on this matter.

As regards the third level of the Maslow's theory, 'love and belonging', Longyearbyen seems to be a destination mostly chosen by couples, that are seeking tranquillity, solitude, intimacy and quality time. According to the interviews conducted, 36% of all participants were couples. As #T5 and #T22 mentioned, both couples from the Netherlands and from Oslo, respectively, their aim of choosing Longyearbyen as a destination, was to look for some intimacy and to connect themselves as a couple. Furthermore, #T27 constituted a particular example, since this couple was back in Longyearbyen as a way of remembering the good times that the boyfriend had when he was studying there for six months, and, at the same time, to show his girlfriend the place where he was so happy.

Longyearbyen is also a destination for families that are looking for group activities to spend some quality time. Even more, at this destination, many solo travellers feel the need of being with their loved ones. With regard to families, which represents 14% of the whole interviewees, 'doing something different' in company of their kids, constitutes the main

motivation for visiting Longyearbyen, as #T9 and #T10 mentioned, both families from mainland Norway. The Northern Lights, the real winter and the Arctic fauna were the main attractions for them. As to solo travellers, for some of them, like #T21, a woman from France, going to Svalbard represented a physical distance with their family bonds. She mentioned that travelling to Longyearbyen on her own represented a huge challenge. The fact of having her relatives so far away, made her feel isolated. In addition, #T39, a man from the Netherlands, shared his dream of bringing his two sons in his next trip, as a way to show them the beauty of the Arctic and the respectful environment. While on the subject, for 17% of the participants interviewed face-to-face, meaning, 5 interviews out of 28, their major fear and worry represented having their family far away, especially for those couples having kids. As an example, #T13, a couple from Brazil, although they do have grown-up kids, they still had the concern of being in a far distant place not known by their beloved ones. However, in other cases, respondents felt a real connection with the destination itself, since it made them appreciate unique features, such as the Arctic remoteness, weather, natural phenomena and the Arctic fauna.

Besides, all outdoor activities undertaken in Longyearbyen are in groups, either snowmobile trips, hiking excursions, Northern Lights' excursions or guided tours to the coal mine number 3. This means that, for both solo travellers, couples, or those travelling with friends or family, it is possible to satisfy the need of sharing the living moment with the next one, either by expressing about the extreme cold experienced, or just by sharing the beauty of the Arctic landscapes. This feeling of companionship makes the experience be more realistic since human contact with others facilitates each one to express their feelings and share emotions. Furthermore, as expressed by Wu (2003), social belonging also involves the need of knowing oneself's roots. That was the case of #T6, a Russian couple that was particularly interested in knowing Russian settlements outside Russia. They came to Longyearbyen with the aim of visiting either Barentsburg or Pyramiden, two Russian coal mine communities.

Going on the fourth stage of the Maslow's hierarchy of needs, it comes the 'esteem' motivational level. Along the interviews, it can be perceived how respondents went beyond their boundaries, as #T21, a solo traveller from France expressed, that coming on her own to Longyearbyen represented a big challenge. However, she wanted to reach the top of the world, regardless of her fear. Furthermore, #T2, #T15, #T16, #T19 and #T23, a solo traveller, two couples and two families, respectively, expressed the fact that going to the northernmost place in the world represented the main motivation for travelling to Longyearbyen. In addition, 'to do something different', as #T1, #T25, #T35, #T36, two couples and two solo travellers were looking for, represented a way of satisfying the own ego. Also, #T43, a solo traveller from Sweden, emphasized that he chose Longyearbyen since it represented an exotic destination, and not the typical one to go for vacations. His aim was to see odd places where not everybody goes. As well, #T7, a couple from the United States, emphasized that they wanted to be the first ones among their friends to discover Svalbard.

Concerning the fifth level of Maslow's theory, 'self-actualization', it means an abstract level to analyse. According to the interviews conducted, Longyearbyen is a destination aimed to discover the unknown, to challenge oneself on going the furthest north, to have a different experience, and sometimes, the experience of a lifetime, as well as a perfect place to look for inner peace. Therefore, it is interesting to notice that when it was asked to the interviewees if Longyearbyen represented the highlight of their trip, all the ones that were interviewed face-to-face except one, claimed that it definitely was. This statement means that Longyearbyen had a high standard of satisfaction among respondents, as well as it gives a reference that it is either by the virtue of having unique attractions, or by the quality of the services offered.

In addition, by asking the participants the aim of their trip regarding themselves, the indication of a having a "desire for self-fulfillment" (Ivtzan *et al.*, 2013, p. 119) was reflected on: the wish for establishing a deep connection as a couple (#T5 from the Netherlands), to experience the mystery of the North Pole by being the first ones among their friends to visit Longyearbyen (#T7, a couple from the United States, and #T17, three friends from Italy), to complete the bucket list (#T14, a solo traveller from India, and #T38, an Irish couple), to reach the top of the world (#T7), to go beyond their limits (#T8, a couple that lives in Switzerland), to go further than they usually do (#T9, a family of four from Oslo), to explore more of the world (#T11, two friends from the United States), to experience being in the middle of nowhere (#T11), the opportunity of having the best photography shots (#T12, a photographer from the United Kingdom), the opportunity of challenging themselves (#T13, a couple from Brazil & #T16, a couple from Greece), to look for a remote place (#T16), to look for peace and calmness (#T1, a couple from Switzerland; #T5, a couple from the Netherlands; #T11, two friends from the United States; #T15, a couple from the United Kingdom; #T20, a couple from France; #T21, a French solo traveller; #T22, a Norwegian couple), to look for adrenaline (#T19, a French family), to travel alone to such a challenging destination so up north (#T21, a solo traveller from France), the opportunity of taking his family Far North (#T23, a family from Spain), to remember old good times experienced in Longyearbyen (#T27, a couple from Alaska), as well as #T28, a woman from Italy that wanted to have a similar experience as the one she had in Lapland by remembering when she was pregnant of her first daughter and saw the Northern Lights for the first time.

Another way of reaching the own maximum potential and satisfy the own desires is represented by joining outdoor activities, as it was expressed by #T19, a family of three from France, whose trip to Longyearbyen was a dream come true, since the trip was prepared in greater detail to have the northernmost hike in the world after having achieved many trails around the world. Another example of full realization of oneself by being immersed into their own culture, is the example of #T6, a couple from Russia, that wanted to visit a Russian community outside Russia. They discovered that in the vicinity of Longyearbyen, there were two Russian coal mine communities.

This fifth level already introduced, is certainly the most interesting one. The interviews reflect the rewarding feeling of joy that respondents experience after joining outdoor activities that were on their bucket list. That is the driving force for “abandoning familiar comforts and explore new possibilities” (Ivtzan *et al.*, 2013, p. 120). Therefore, reaching the High Arctic demands taking risks and being brave to deal with extraordinary conditions. As well, some key words expressed by the interviewees were the indicators of their intention of reaching their full potential, like the following ones: “explore”, “remote place”, “northernmost town”, “real winter”, “the cold”.

Lastly, on this highest level of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, peak experiences come into the self-actualization level of needs. The uniqueness of the landscapes of Svalbard, remoteness and climate allows to have the opportunity to experience a particular time, since getting to the High Arctic involves an accurate organization, and sometimes the investment of a big amount of money, since any trip to the High North is still extreme expensive. According to the responses, the wilderness might be the main trigger to reach this state of joy, since it provides a combination of pleasure and revitalization that enhances the spiritual and emotional side of the human being. Wilderness has today a positive connotation, since it is associated with peace and connection with nature. However, in the past, wilderness had an opposite meaning since it was associated with the concept of danger, discomfort and unease (Stefansson, 1913).

According to the interviews followed, many respondents have experienced moments of intense happiness and gratitude, as for example, the case of #T19, a family from France that was expecting this trip for a long time, and at the moment they were materializing their dream, great gratitude and joy was expressed in the interviews, since they mentioned that they were really happy and excited to be achieving the northernmost hiking trail in the world. Another example, #T7, a couple from the United States, the woman revealed that her highlight of the trip was to drive a snowmobile, same as #T12, two friends from the United Kingdom that wanted to feel a rush of adrenaline by joining an excursion on snowmobile. Furthermore, the word ‘adrenaline’ was also used by #T19 at the time of expressing this by experiencing a bit of risk at a remote place such as Longyearbyen. Besides, #39, a Dutch solo traveller, emphasized that the impression that the beautiful and serene landscape of Longyearbyen made on her, was unprecedented.

However, in the case of #T14, an Indian solo traveller, his peak experience was not connected to any attraction of the destination. In his case, it was represented by having the chance to meet Professor Holmen who is currently the international director of the Norwegian Polar Institute, an Institution that pays attention to the environmental need of the High Arctic (Norwegian Polar Institute, 2019). In addition, for #T18, two friends from Denmark and Mexico, their peak experience was a culinary moment, due to the opportunity of trying seal and reindeer meat. Moreover, for #T27, a couple from Alaska, their peak experience of the trip was translated by sharing moments together and by visiting those

places that the partner has been when he was a student at the University Centre in Svalbard, in Longyearbyen. Also, #T43, a Swedish solo traveller, expressed that the landscape of Longyearbyen was magically beautiful. This comment shows that his peak experience was connected to nature.

In addition, at many interviews, the word ‘northernmost’ gives the clue that reaching this geographical point is, in fact, extremely gratifying, since there is a dose of uncertainty throughout the travel experience. As for example, for #T17, three friends from Italy, Longyearbyen represented a huge surprise, since they were not expecting a lively town in such a northern place. Additionally, #T42, a solo traveller from the United States, expressed that Longyearbyen was the wildest place he has been so far. This expression means that he has reached to a point of great excitement by visiting this place. Similarly, #T11, two friends from the United States, also used the word ‘wildest’, for referring the archipelago of Svalbard and Longyearbyen as being the ‘wildest’ part of the Arctic.

Lastly, there are also other key expressions that are indicators of the willingness to have peak experiences. That is the case of #T8, a couple that lives in Switzerland, that expressed their willingness to ‘go beyond the limits’. This gives the idea of the need of doing activities to reach the utmost of oneself’s capacity. Moreover, for #T27, the couple from Alaska, that extreme joy was translated by having remembered good old times together. #T39, a solo traveller from the Netherlands, said that the impression that the beautiful serene environment of Longyearbyen has made on him was unprecedented, expressing in this way the great joy experienced. Furthermore, the word ‘breathtaking’, as it was expressed by #T49, a Chinese traveller that visited Longyearbyen with her family, expresses being overwhelmed by the destination. She said that she is a very well-travelled person, but nothing has taken her breath away like Longyearbyen.

4.3.2 Analysis of the travel motivation by applying Pearce’s model of the travel career ladder

In this section, the respondents’ past travel experience is analysed in order to understand if there are some aspects in common among the interviewees that visited Longyearbyen. By analysing the participants’ travel career ladder, it helps to understand the relationship between their previous experience and the current need of exploring new places like the High Arctic, as a way of moving forward in their travel career. In consequence, it has been observed that most of the interviewees have organized their trip on their own, by Internet, or at travel offices located in Longyearbyen, with the exception of two interviewees that mentioned that their trip was organized by a travel agency in their hometowns (#T5 and #T12, a Dutch couple and two friends from the United Kingdom, respectively). Accordingly, most of the respondents that reach this part of the world are already experienced people, being able to fend for themselves.

According to the in-depth interviews conducted face-to-face (See Appendix 4), along the questions made, five of them were the key to identify and analyse the travel career of the respondents:

1. How did you know about Longyearbyen for the first time?
2. What has attracted you the most to come to visit Longyearbyen?
3. Why did you choose to come here to Longyearbyen instead of going to a heavenly beach in the Caribbean, for example?
4. What was the aim of this trip in relation to yourself?
5. In your whole life, to how many countries have you travelled approximately?

To start with the analysis of the respondents' travel career, it is important to know their experience gained throughout their life. Therefore, by asking them to how many countries they have travelled to, that gives the hint to know the travel background of a person. With regard to that question, some respondents have answered it proudly, by emphasizing the number of countries visited, but for others, it was a normal question that did not draw their attention. Nevertheless, all interviewees showed to have a dose of spontaneity and confidence in themselves at the time of telling about their previous travel experience.

For some interviewees, to count the number of countries visited represented a way of expressing that they are moving forward on their travel career ladder. That was the case of #T21, a French solo traveller that mentioned that she has travelled to 42 countries, and that she considers herself a citizen of the world; as well as the case of #T11 and #T12, from the United States and United Kingdom respectively, that counted around 30 countries already visited. The same happened with #T15, a couple from the United Kingdom, that emphasized that they have already been to the five continents. Besides, generally speaking, all respondents are quite enthusiastic by sharing the details of the countries visited throughout their life. It has been found that most respondents have not only visited countries in Europa, but also in America, Africa, Asia and Oceania. However, there are slight differences among nationalities. That was the case of the Norwegians, as for example #T9 and #T10, both families from Oslo and Stavanger, respectively, that emphasized that they usually travel around Norway and Scandinavia; and the case of #T6, a couple from Russia, that said that they were used to travel to Siberia during summertime.

Furthermore, there are also key words that indicate how well travelled are the interviewees. For example: 'I have explored a lot' (#T2, a solo traveller from the United States); 'I have travelled to many places (...), many cities' (#T4, two friends from the United States), 'We travel quite often' (#T7, a couple from the United States), 'I'm very well-travelled' (#T49, a Chinese girl). Therefore, it has been observed that many respondents are eager travellers, and that is reflected on their enthusiasm expressed by having reached the northernmost point of the world. That was the case of #T4, #T5, #T10, #T15, #T19, #T21, #T24, #T31, #T33, #T38, #T46, whose main motivation of reaching Longyearbyen was the fact of being located the northernmost a human being could reach. The key questions for getting this information

were, what attract people to come to visit Longyearbyen, and how they knew about this destination for the first time.

By analysing the answers of the question why tourists chose Longyearbyen instead of a heavenly beach at the Caribbean, as well as their aim of the trip in relation to themselves, the most common answers were the following: ‘to have a different kind of experience’, ‘to discover something authentic’, ‘to connect with the surrounding nature’, ‘to connect with ourselves’, ‘to reach the top of the world’, ‘to experience the mystery of the North Pole’, ‘to go beyond our limits’, ‘to explore unspoiled areas’, ‘to be in the wildest part of the Arctic’, ‘to go to a place where little is known’, ‘to feel a rush of adrenaline’, ‘to face extreme weather conditions’, ‘to be the first ones of their friends and relatives to go there’, ‘to experience the real Arctic’, ‘to have quality time as a family’, ‘to clean up my head and fill up my heart’, ‘because Longyearbyen is kind of exotic’. Therefore, it can be perceived that respondents give a lot of value to the ‘self-actualization’ stage of Maslow’s theory. Most of those answer reveal an internal need to be sated, that means, the need of fulfilling a dream or experience an inner state of peace and tranquillity. However, the case of #T17, three friends from Italy, reflects an external need to be sated, since for those tourists, the aim of their trip was not only to satisfy themselves by accomplishing what they were looking for, but also to show others their achievement. They stated their wish to be the first ones of their friends and relatives to go to Longyearbyen. This reveals the need of prestige and the need of esteem by others, that is, the fourth level of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs.

Those answers already stated, reveal that respondents tend to be on a higher level in their travel career ladder. However, the need of going back to the lowest levels of the pyramid does not mean a regression. Since the travel career ladder is not lineal, many are just desiring to relax, as for example #T15, a couple from the United Kingdom, that have already visited the five continents, as well as #T5, a well-travelled Dutch couple, that wanted to have some relaxing days away from the stress of a city.

Moreover, the concept of a travel career is complemented by including the term pattern. In this regard, those that follow a passion or a specific hobby, do develop a motivational pattern to follow a travel career. However, tourists do not have to be fix to that pattern, since along the life, new interests can be awakened. For example, #T19, a French family whose passion is hiking, they mentioned that their motivation for reaching Longyearbyen was the fact of being able to do the northernmost hike in the world. Additionally, a curiosity may awake new patterns into the travel career of any tourist, and therefore, that pattern can be the guide for future trips. An example could be those interested in Northern places, or those that love to be in contact with unspoiled surroundings and experience phenomena like the Northern Lights or the Polar Nights. Accordingly, by following a pattern, a tourist is seeking to travel to places that sate that motivational need.

4.3.3 Analysis of the travel motivation by applying Crompton's push/pull motivational theory and Dann's travel motives

The in-depth interviews conducted at the destination allow identifying many push factors, meaning, the driving force that makes a tourist leave his usual living place and travel to Longyearbyen. In addition, pull factors are shortly analysed, as a way of knowing what Longyearbyen has in order to attract tourists that are seeking to sate their needs. To start with, according to the seven push motivations described by Crompton in 1979, the first push factor, 'escape from the mundane environment' is represented by those respondents that are eager to go away from their routine. In this way, #T5, a Dutch couple, emphasized their need of escaping from the stress of the city. Similarly, #T15, a British couple, came to Longyearbyen in order to look for 'not crowded' places, and to be far away from big towns. In addition, #T22, a couple from Oslo, expressed their need of having three days off from their job and away from their children, in order to look for intimacy.

According to the second push factor, 'exploration and evaluation of self', it constitutes an important push factor, since the features of the Arctic mean to face extreme situations, because of the fact that Longyearbyen is located so up north. Those risks involve either climate contingencies or dangers such avalanches, crevasses and the encounter of polar bears. By analysing this factor, #T8, a couple that lives in Switzerland, did affirm that the aim of their trip to Longyearbyen was to challenge themselves to go beyond their limits, the same push motivation that #T13 had, a couple from Brazil, that also wanted to feel being explorers like Amyr Klink, a Brazilian expeditioner. Besides, #T14, an Indian solo traveller, expressed his enthusiasm of being able to meet the director of the Norwegian Polar Institute, which represented a huge challenge for his career. In addition to, for #T16, a Greek couple, travelling so up north also represented a challenge, since Svalbard is a place that none of their friends and relatives have heard of it before. As well, for #T21, a French solo traveller, to travel on her own to such a northern and remote place, it represented a big challenge. In this way, each of those respondents are discovering personal features that does allow them to face their fears.

Going further on the analysis of push motivations, the third one described by Crompton, 'relaxation', it involves not only the action of calming down by resting, but also by joining activities. Concerning the last one, to join outdoor excursions was the aim of every respondent that visited Longyearbyen, since many of the excursions offered in Longyearbyen are the typical ones of the High Arctic during wintertime, such as dog sledding, chasing the Northern Lights, snowmobile excursions, cross country skiing, hiking and having Arctic meals, such as reindeer and seal tasting. As well, the need of relaxation was expressed by #T5, #T11, #T12, #T15, #T20, #T21, #T22, #T33, by mentioning the need of relax, to have intimacy, and to experience the calmness and peace of the High Arctic.

‘Prestige’ represents the fourth push motivation proposed by Crompton. Some respondents are eager to gain recognition from others, as it happened with #T7 and #T17, a couple from the United States and three friends from Italy, respectively, that emphasized the desire of being the first ones among their friends to go and discover Longyearbyen. This statement reveals the need of enhancing the need of esteem. Besides, the fifth push motivation defined by Crompton, ‘regression’, is illustrated by the need of doing activities and getting in touch with emotions that are not possible to experience on the daily routine life. That could be translated as the desire to feel adrenaline by driving a snowmobile, as it was explained by #T12, two friends from the United Kingdom as well as #T19, a French family, that was looking for a bit of risk by going so up north. #T18 represents a curious case, since they expressed that they got excited for using the balaclava, the mask that covers the whole face to be protected from the cold wind, as well as to wear so many layers of cloth. In this way, they felt like a Michelin toy. Therefore, the sense of regression is represented by the need of feeling to be like children, like going back in the past when the little things represented joy.

Moreover, the sixth push motivation, named ‘enhancement of kinship relationships’ is characterized by the need of strengthen a relationship. Among respondents, this motivation is perceived as the need to be connected with each other, as it was stated by #T5, a Dutch couple, and #T26, a family living in Belgium. Besides, #T23 from Spain, expressed the need of having some quality time as a family, as well as #T39, a Dutch solo traveller, that shared his desire of bringing his two sons for the next trip, since the impression that he got from his trip to the High Arctic was unequalled. Moving forward, the seventh push motivation, ‘facilitation of social interaction’ is also linked to the last one. Although this push motivation is not explicitly described by the participants, all outdoor activities in Longyearbyen are shared in groups, meaning that all tourists do meet people during their stay. However, Longyearbyen seems to be a destination where respondents are more focused on the place rather than on socializing.

Talking about the two pull motivations described by Crompton, ‘novelty’ represents an important factor, since curiosity is one of the mainly driving forces that urges tourists to explore Longyearbyen. This destination has special attributes that awaken the need of looking for the unknown, for exploring remote and unspoiled places. Those characteristics were expressed by #T1, a Swiss couple whose motivation to travel to this destination was triggered by the eagerness of knowing new places. Similar answers were given by #T25, #T35 and #T36, a couple that lives in Switzerland, a Norwegian and a British solo traveller, respectively. Their aim by travelling to Longyearbyen was either to experience something extremely different compared to their other trips, to do a different type of trip, or to experience a different winter. In addition, #T9, a Norwegian family, they had the need of going beyond the traditional Norwegian places they usually go for holidays.

‘Novelty’ is also represented by a Russian couple (#T6) that was looking for Russian settlements abroad. Furthermore, the key word ‘to explore’ allows the analysis of those

respondents whose motivation to travel to Longyearbyen was awakened by the need of seeking adventure in search of new discoveries in the High Arctic. That was the case of #T2, a solo traveller from the United States that was seduced by the need of discovering something authentic in an unspoiled area of the world. In addition, #T8, a couple that lives in Switzerland, they had the aim of challenging themselves by going beyond their limits, and therefore explore the virgin nature of Svalbard, same motivation that #T21 had, a French solo traveller that wanted to reach the northernmost corner of the world. As well, #T11, two friends from the United States, emphasized their desire to explore hidden places where little is known. For this reason, nature plays an important role in people's motivation, as #T15, #T26 and #T40 stated, a couple from the United Kingdom, a Belgian family and a traveller from Denmark, who put special interest in exploring the peaceful wilderness.

Additionally, Crompton proposes the second pull motivation, the education factor. The High Arctic has unique phenomena such as the Northern Lights, and rare fauna, such as polar bears and polar foxes. Therefore, many respondents shared their desire of chasing the Aurora Borealis and being able to learn about this phenomenon, as well as to have a close encounter with polar bears, taking into consideration the risk involved in this latter activity. Moreover, many participants joined several night excursions so as to increase the chances of seeing the Northern Lights. Indeed, 29 interviews out of 50, that is, 58% of all participants, they emphasized their high interest in having the lucky chance of seeing the Aurora. Besides, 30% of the participants, meaning 15 out of 50 interviews, they were interested in spotting the polar bears. Moreover, #T14, a solo traveller from India, represents an interesting case, since he travelled to Longyearbyen with the intention of studying the effects of global warming on the Arctic marine biodiversity.

Another fact that arouses the respondents' curiosity are the Polar Nights. Although the dark season was already over when the face-to-face interviews were conducted at the destination, many expressed their curiosity in experiencing a phenomenon that is only visible in the high latitudes of the High Arctic. However, only 6 interviews out of 50 revealed that participants were interested in appreciating the twilight season that starts shortly after the dark season ends. Besides, a Danish traveller, #T40, represented the only case where he focused the attention in knowing more about the town's reminiscence. Along the interview, he expressed his interest to travel to places that still preserve the appearance of the old days. Although the interview did not go deeper into analysis, this answer might be related to the fact that Longyearbyen had and still has a strong culture related to mining, a very important industry on Svalbard. Finally, 4 interviewees showed their interest in tasting the Arctic cuisine by attending an Arctic dinner. That shows another way of learning about the Arctic culinary, and its Delicatessen.

The seven push motivations and two pull factors described by Crompton, can be complemented with the motivation of leaving the daily routine, either because of the boredom caused by every day's life, or because of political, social or economic problems.

Although no deep investigation has been made on the tourists' background, from a general point of view, anomie, the first of the two travel motives described by Dann in 1977, has only been perceived by the need of getting away from the routine, similar to the need of escaping, as it was analysed before. Longyearbyen represents a destination off the beaten track that leads to experience feelings and sensations that make the psyche escape temporarily from the routine and persisting problems existing at every day's life. According to the interviews conducted, from the moment a tourist touches ground on Svalbard, the contrast represented by its unique landscape and weather conditions, induces anyone to be focused on the present, leaving the problems and the feeling of weariness behind.

Concerning ego-enhancement, the second travel motive described by Dann, it has been observed that for some respondents, travelling to Longyearbyen represents a chance of boasting the own ego. Indeed, some respondents are motivated to be the first ones among their family and friends to visit this destination, and therefore, to have the chance of telling the own experience according to their perception. Moreover, Longyearbyen represents a destination where people can exaggerate by giving magnificent details. During the interview to #T7, a couple from the United States, it was interesting to hear that the interviewee shared his wish of coming back to their hometown and being able to tell anecdotes about the trip, unless he was eaten by a polar bear in the middle of the journey. This statement reveals that the Arctic might be for some people the proper setting for boasting about one self's experience.

4.3.4 Analysis of the travel motivation by applying Gnoth's study of motivation and expectation formation

Expectations play an important role when planning the next destination. Due to the fact that the archipelago of Svalbard does not represent a usual destination to go and taking into account that weather contingencies do not always allow to make plans in advance, that aspect of the High Arctic produces anxiety and excitement that is materialized on the desire to meet aspirations. Along the interviews conducted, respondents had low expectations regarding the infrastructure of Longyearbyen, but high expectations in regard to the surrounding nature. For this reason, many respondents get astonished by finding that it is a well-developed town, sometimes classified as being 'at the same level of a first-world country's town', as it was illustrated by #T20 and #T23, a French couple and a Spanish family.

Besides, the term expectation expresses what is being hoped to get from a destination. Therefore, by having chosen Longyearbyen as a destination, most of the respondents are waiting to see and experience the traditional tourism-related attractions. One of the common answers in relation to the interviewees' expectations was to have the chance of seeing polar bears and foxes (#T6, #T9, #T13, #T18, #T20, and #T40), to be able to see the Northern Lights (#T2, #T3, #T4, #T5, #T6, #T7, #T8, #T9, #T10, #T13, #T15, #T16, #T17, #T20,

#T22, #T23, #T24, #T26, #T28, #T31, #T33, #T36, #T38, #T49 and #T50), to join an excursion by snowmobile (#T6, #T7, #T11, #T12, #T16, #T17, #T20, #T21, #T25, #T26, #T27, #T36, #T39), or to hike (#T19, #T36 and #T41). For those having a specific aim, as #T19, a French family did, to hike in the northernmost point of the world, was the trigger to go there. By having planned their trip so carefully, expectations raised their levels of anxiety, adding the fact that money represented another factor that did contribute to plan their trip to Longyearbyen in detail, in order to not waste money and time.

Indeed, the expression ‘hope to’ was explicitly mentioned by #T2, a solo traveller from the United States that expressed that she had the expectation of hoping to see again the Northern Lights, since the last time she saw them was from an airplane, and colours were not bright enough. In addition, #T9, a Norwegian family, expressed that they were hoping to see some polar bears and foxes, so as to give the chance to their children to experience this unique attraction. As well, #T47, a Thai girl, she regretted not having the chance of seeing the polar bears. Moreover, #T29, a German woman, mentioned that she was hoping for her trip to have lots of snow, amazing tours, nice people and the chance to see some wildlife. #T38, an Irish man, also mentioned that he travelled to Longyearbyen in February hoping to see the Northern Lights.

However, it has been found that, due to the fact that respondents spent an average of four days in Longyearbyen, not much time is given in order to expect getting the most of every attraction. Outdoor activities are subjected to weather conditions. For this reason, expectations are sometimes not met. Furthermore, the chance of seeing the Northern Lights is strictly related to the solar activity and the condition of having clear skies. Consequently, the fact of being Longyearbyen an expensive destination and difficult to reach, it makes the illusion to be lucky enough in having the chance of either seeing the phenomenon of the Aurora Borealis or at least to spot some polar bears, bearing in mind that both attractions are difficult to predict.

4.3.5 The impact of misconceptions in the travel motivation to Longyearbyen

Misconceptions represent an obstacle when planning a trip to Longyearbyen. Therefore, along the interviews conducted, it was asked how respondents did imagine Longyearbyen before they knew about this destination. Concerning life in the High Arctic, it is interesting to notice that there is a common statement shared among interviewees, which is the fact of believing that no life could possibly exist at those latitudes. That was expressed by #T16, #T17 and #T24, a Greek couple, three Italian friends and a Spanish family, respectively. A similar concept was expressed by #T25, a couple that lives in Switzerland, that had the conviction that in Longyearbyen it would not be possible to have a normal standard life. Moreover, #T20 and #T21, a couple and a solo traveller, both from France, imagined the area of the archipelago of Svalbard as an uninhabited and isolated place, where polar bears

are wandering around. Also, #T18, from Denmark and Mexico, expressed that they imagined Longyearbyen as a remote, tough and deserted place.

In addition, concerning the Arctic weather conditions, for both #T20, #T21, #T25, and #T26, a couple and a solo traveller from France, another couple that lives in Switzerland, and a Belgian family, respectively, they had the idea that Svalbard was a place similar to a white scenario, with kilometres and kilometres of snow and full of ice. Indeed, talking about ice, #T24, a Spanish family thought that maybe some explorer would have the chance to get to this part of the planet and set temporarily some ice camps. Besides, talking about the misconception of thinking that the northern a town is, the less developed, #T23 became amazed by finding that Longyearbyen was at the same level as other modern cities, and that it is even more developed than other towns in Lapland. As well, #T24 was not expecting to find such a beautiful town so up north, and #T25 did not imagine the possibility that the town could have 2,100 inhabitants in such a northern location in the world.

However, those that have already been to other parts of the High Arctic did have an idea of what to expect from Longyearbyen. That was the case of #T22, a Norwegian couple, that already knew that there were polar bears up north in their country. Certainly, they did know that Svalbard's soil is permafrost, a piece of information that was not mentioned by others. Besides, #T23, a Spanish family told that, since they have already travelled to Rovaniemi in the past winter, they did have an idea of what to expect from Longyearbyen. As well, #T28, an Italian travel agent, proved to be more informed about the Arctic features by having had the opportunity to travel to Rovaniemi, the Finnish Lapland for working reasons. Therefore, she did not have any misconceptions at all, and was expecting to find a similar environment as the one she had in Lapland.

4.4 Analysis of the influence of Social Media in the travel motivation

4.4.1 The impact of Social Media in the decision-making process of a trip

This section analyses how Social Media plays a role in the tourists' motivation to travel. Along the interviews (See Appendix 4), two questions represent the key to identify and analyse if Social Media does influence on the motivation of visiting a place. Those questions are the following ones:

1. Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip?
2. How did you know about Longyearbyen for the first time?

From the total number of interviews, 44% of them are conducted via Instagram, the only Social Media platform that is used as a medium to contact tourists. However, it is perceived that those interviewed via Instagram do not present any variation compared to those interviewed face-to-face, in regard to the influence of Social Media on their decision of the

trip. Out of 50, 12 interviews revealed that either Instagram or Facebook did contribute to the decision of travelling to Longyearbyen. However, it resulted to be a bit ambiguous, since for some, Instagram or Facebook was just a source of inspiration, but for others, Social Media gave them convincing arguments to plan their trip to Longyearbyen. For example: #T2, a solo traveller from the United States, confessed that Social Media definitely influenced her on the motivation to travel to Longyearbyen. She was looking up on Instagram for some information related to Northern Norway, and therefore, she saw pictures of Longyearbyen, so she started writing to those Instagram users that posted them. A similar answer was obtained from #T21, a French solo traveller that admitted being a 100% addicted to Social Media. She usually follows some influencers, adventure travellers and Destination Marketing Organizations so as to be updated with many destinations around the world. She describes herself as a passionate traveller, that is always checking for some inspiration on Social Media. She discovered Longyearbyen because she was following a fashion maker on Instagram that has already visited the town. Furthermore, #T29, a German couple, had a straightforward answer by saying that the partner saw a picture of a polar bear from Svalbard on Instagram and she immediately had the need to go there. Consequently, she admitted having been influenced by that picture on Instagram.

However, for others, Instagram proved to not be such a decisive tool for taking a decision, but rather more as a source of inspiration. That was the case of #T3, three friends from Italy, since one of them saw some pictures of Longyearbyen on Instagram and told the other two friends that this destination should be the one chosen for chasing the Northern Lights. Besides, #T11, two friends from the United States, mentioned that after discovering the existence of Svalbard, they were amazed by the beauty of the pictures shown on Instagram.

Furthermore, by following hashtags on Instagram related to Longyearbyen, it proved to be the source for finding the motivation to travel there, such as #longyearbyen and #svalbard, to give an example, in order to have updated the news feed with pictures posted by other tourists. That was the case of #T7, #T8, #T16, #T17, #T23 and #T39, some couples from the United States, Switzerland and Greece, three Italian friends, a Spanish family and a Dutch solo traveller, respectively. Some of them started following those hashtags as soon as they discovered Longyearbyen through other media channels, and others, just a couple of days before travelling. A slight difference was found with #T19, a French family, where the youngest son instead of following hashtags related to the destination, he started following hashtags of explorers in order to get some inspiration from them, since Longyearbyen is a destination encountered in the past by explorers and today, also by adventurous people, among many other types of tourists. Finally, in the case of #T26, a family living in Belgium, during their trip, the two kids started following hashtags related to polar bears, one of the main attractions that people heading to Longyearbyen are waiting to spot.

Another interesting fact represents the age of those active followers on Instagram. Although the age is not asked to those participants interviewed via Instagram, it is found that on the

interviews conducted face-to-face, Social Media followers are mostly young people, ranging from teenagers, aged 12, 15 and 18 years old, to people in their mid-20s and mid-30s, as well as an exceptional case of a man in his mid-50s. This analysis is representative of the current worldwide situation, where Instagram is mainly followed by the young generation. Besides, still talking about Instagram followers, it is interesting to perceive that among couples, as it was the case of #T7, #T8, #T16 from the United States, Switzerland and Greece respectively, it is the woman the one that is more interested in following hashtags on Instagram, rather than their partners.

With respect to how respondents knew about Longyearbyen for their first time, it was only in the case of #T2, #T21 and #T29, a solo traveller from the United States and from France, and a German couple, that all of them discovered Svalbard thanks to Instagram. Furthermore, as it was mentioned before, #T21 declared herself being addicted to Instagram, as well as #T49, a Chinese woman, with the difference that in the latter case, Social Media did not influence her in the planning of the trip to Longyearbyen. However, for others, Google and TripAdvisor represented the starting point of the discovery of this destination, as happened with #T1, #T3, #T6, #T15, #T17, #T20, #T25, #T26, #T31. Besides, another way how respondents randomly found Longyearbyen was by playing with Google Maps, as it was the case of #T16, a Greek couple. Finally, some others discovered the place by a travel agency, as happened with #T5 and #T12.

Even though Instagram represents a platform for sharing experiences by posting pictures and live videos, it also means a virtual place for showing off and enhance the person's ego. Although interviewees' behaviour via Instagram is not analysed in depth, this fact is only studied through some key words found on the interviews. As for example, #T7, a couple from the United States, that stated that they wanted to be the first ones in discovering Longyearbyen and telling their friends about their experience, unless they were eaten by a polar bear. Therefore, even though no research has been done further, those words might indicate being potential Social Media users that boast about their achievements on their posts.

According to the researcher's experience along this study, Instagram represented the main door for virtually exploring Longyearbyen through the eyes of the current tourists that are visiting the destination. It shows to be a way of shortening distances, both physically and psychologically. Svalbard does bring lots of questions, anxiety and uncertainty for the first timers. Even more, the researcher discovered that Instagram was a popular tool for sharing pictures of this destination. According to the interviews conducted, every piece of information available on Social Media does awake people's curiosity. It proved to be that Svalbard's special attractions are the hook to catch Instagram users' attention. As an example, a popular picture that is commonly shared are the Longyearbyen's polar bear signs, both located at 2 km from the centre of the town, that indicate that from that point onwards, there might be the presence of polar bears all over the archipelago of Svalbard. Other

common pictures posted are either tourists driving snowmobiles or hiking into the mountains or ice caves, as well as pictures of the Northern Lights and several landscapes of the surroundings fiords.

It seems as if Instagram, in the case of those users following hashtags related to Svalbard, represents the virtual place for reuniting Arctic lovers. Furthermore, the Destination Marketing Organization named 'Visit Svalbard', promotes the archipelago by suggesting users to add the hashtag #visitsvalbard, #discoversvalbard, #mysvalbard and #mittsvalbard ('my Svalbard' translated from Norwegian) to any picture uploaded. Most of the users do cope with the marketing of the destination by adding as many hashtags as possible, meaning, that those tourists are also interested in making their experience be publicly visible. Therefore, by following those hashtags, the researcher started being familiar with the destination itself, as well as its attractions, climate and possible dangers to encounter.

Concerning the experience of the researcher, the personal Instagram account was set to 'public view' once the destination was reached, in order to perceive the interest of other users. It has been observed that every picture uploaded during the stay in Longyearbyen was receiving a large quantity of 'likes' from Arctic lovers and other tourists that have already been there. It is important to mention that the researcher's pictures appeared on almost every hashtag related to the destination. Moreover, some travellers that were planning their trip, started to send private messages asking about the weather or about details of the life up north. Many others were also eager to receive personal recommendations, as for example, which excursion to do or which company to trust. Little by little, a small community was built among the interested ones.

4.4.2 The travel fear of missing out

Along the interviews conducted, the travel fear of missing out has been difficult to perceive. This phenomenon has only been observed through some particular answers obtained from the respondents. In this way, by asking the participants about their main motivations to go to Longyearbyen as well as how they discovered this destination, some phrases were the key to identify the need of travelling to the Arctic as a way of calming down the anxiety produced by having seen posts or pictures on Social Media. The case of #T29, a woman from Germany, is the most representative one. She expressed that her need of visiting Longyearbyen came immediately after she had seen a picture on Instagram of a polar bear in Svalbard. The word 'immediately after' is a sign that Social Media caused her the anxiety to satisfy what she was not having at that moment. Furthermore, #T36, a solo traveller from the United Kingdom, does represent another example, since that person expressed the desire of visiting Longyearbyen after having seen a friend's picture of their visit on Instagram.

According to some interviewees, Social Media awakened the need of having the same experience as other users did, with the expectation of reaching the same state of joy. However, before reaching Longyearbyen, it is not possible to predict the limits that the mother nature sets on the Arctic. Thus, reality hits once the tourist arrives at the destination and faces the extreme conditions of the High Arctic. Sometimes, there is a big contrast between tourists' expectations and the reality experienced at the destination. Although there is no empirical evidence about this matter, this fact has been observed and analysed through informal talks with some of the tourists met at the destination. Anyways, the Arctic still represents for most of the respondents, the 'most' challenging destination they have visited in their lives.

Nonetheless, concerning the High Arctic, there is another 'fear of missing out' due to the consequences of the global warming. The High Arctic and Svalbard are in danger of ceasing to exist. Therefore, #T29, a couple from Germany, shared their fear of never see such nature again due to the climate change. Indeed, Instagram and Facebook represent the virtual place for enhancing awareness. According to the researcher experience, many tourists post pictures of Longyearbyen on Instagram describing the beauty of the unspoiled nature and notifying how vulnerable this part of the planet is. Consequently, other followers, such as activists or nature lover do cooperate by commenting the awareness needed to protect Svalbard's wilderness.

4.4.3 The role of Social Media in debunking misconceptions about the High Arctic

Social Media also plays an important role in debunking misconceptions created on the people's mind. Therefore, the following question is asked in order to analyse the impact of Social Media: Did your perception of Longyearbyen change after seeing pictures or videos on Social Media? Consequently, 15 interviews out of 50 revealed that Social Media represented the platform for discovering features that they were not expecting to find from this Arctic destination. For example, #T8, the woman of a couple that lives in Switzerland, mentioned that she got excited after discovering pictures of the stunning surrounding nature of Longyearbyen. A British solo traveller, #T36, did not know that the Far North could be so attractive. #T47, a couple from Thailand, also got amazed by the beauty of the High Arctic.

Likewise, many respondents were stunned by discovering that Longyearbyen was not as isolated as they previously thought, and that the town does offer lots of facilities and services. That was the case of #T7, #T11, #T19 and #T21, a couple and two friends from the United States, a French family and solo traveller, respectively. #T7 was fascinated by the good organization of the town and the many travel agencies and companies that Longyearbyen has in order to offer all kind of activities. #T11 imagined Longyearbyen as an isolated place, and thanks to the pictures posted on Social Media, she realized that her trip was not going to

be so risky. #T19 discovered through Instagram a description of the town of Longyearbyen through the lenses of the Spanish explorer Paco Nadal, that shared a video showing the facilities of the town. #T21 jumped from thinking that Longyearbyen was an isolated town to see on Instagram the beautiful and colourful houses that it has and the many companies that provide services there. As well, #T3, three Italian friends, got surprised by the possibility of doing so many activities being so near the North Pole.

Finally, talking about Svalbard's fauna, #T10 and #T26, a Norwegian and Belgian family, both could not believe that so many animals could live in a place like the High Arctic. According to #T29, a German couple, their perception of the destination changed after seeing that the fauna of Svalbard was so rich. Besides, #T19 learned about the danger that polar bears do represent to people, thanks to a video posted on Instagram. #T21 discovered through Social Media that polar bears can be encountered in the outskirts of the town. Moreover, talking about the Polar Nights and the Northern Lights, the perception that #T17 had of the destination changed after seeing pictures of the dark season. He realized that Longyearbyen's wintertime was different from other places. Furthermore, #T3 fell in love with Longyearbyen after observing pictures of the Northern Lights on Instagram. In addition, #T2, a solo traveller from the United States, mentioned that the pictures she has seen on Instagram changed her perception of Longyearbyen, since before that, she did not have any idea how the Far North could be. Hence, it illustrated a really different panorama as the one she imagined before. Lastly, #T42 stated that even though Social Media did not influence her on the decision to go to Longyearbyen, after having seen pictures on Facebook, she started to see the High Arctic as a potential place to visit.

CONCLUSION

Since the 90s, tourism in the High Arctic has experienced a rapid growth. According to Visit Svalbard (2019b), in the last 10 years, Longyearbyen has more than doubled the arrival of tourists. Conforming to the interviews conducted at the destination, as soon as the respondents landed on firm ground, that image of an isolated and remote place as it was previously settled on their mind, was transformed into a different one. Furthermore, it was found that respondents got surprised to find that Longyearbyen is a town that offers all kind of facilities at everyone's disposal. Thus, Longyearbyen was perceived as a modern and up-to-date town with a lively and growing society.

Since the inauguration of the airport in 1975, Longyearbyen has proved to be reachable not only by explorers, but also by average tourists. However, the two main drawbacks of the destination are still represented by the climate and the expensiveness to get there and to live. According to the sample, participants were mainly coming from European countries, being Norway on top of the list. Other non-European countries include the United States, China,

Australia and Russia, being the latter country the one interested in exploring the Russian mining settlements of Barentsburg and Pyramiden (Visit Svalbard, 2019b).

This study presented the travel motivations that drive tourists to visit Longyearbyen and the influence exerted by Social Media, with a particular focus on February and March, 2019. The research followed a qualitative analysis since it allowed a deeper understanding of the needs and motivations for travelling to Longyearbyen. Therefore, the paradigm selected was the constructivist paradigm, since it supported the understanding of the travel motivations through different realities. The research design followed five stages. The first one involved an exploratory research through secondary data in order to get familiar with the destination. Then, the second stage included an on-sight exploration of Longyearbyen in order to get to know about activities offered and to have the chance of interacting with local workers. The third stage had to do with participating at different snow-related activities. Then, as the fourth stage it came the gathering of empirical material collected through semi-structured interviews conducted to tourists at the destination. Finally, the fifth stage involved getting in touch with Instagram users that have already been to Longyearbyen and interview them via private message.

The described stages of interviewing gave enough material to defend the two research questions, the focus of this study:

1. What motivates people to travel to Longyearbyen, High Arctic?
2. How does Social Media influence in the travel motivation to visit Longyearbyen?

For the interpretation of the first one, the approach was firstly achieved by following Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Secondly, the interviewees' travel career ladder was analysed by applying Pearce's model in order to understand the relationship between their past experience and their need to travel to the northernmost part of the Arctic. A further analysis took into account the seven push motivations and two pull motivations described by Crompton, as well as Dann's travel motives that point the concepts of anomie and ego-enhancement in relation to the push travel motivations. In addition, Gnoth's study of motivation and expectation formation was studied, as a way of understanding if the attractions and characteristics of Longyearbyen do meet the expectation of the respondents. Besides, the second research question led to the analysis of the impact of Social Media, in order to find the influence that is had on the participants' behaviour. That influence was illustrated by the phenomenon of the travel fear of missing out and the positive role that Social Media has in debunking misconceptions about the Arctic life.

Referring to the sample's profile, most of the respondents were skilled workers. The majority were either travelling with a partner or as solo travellers. Indeed, the location of Longyearbyen showed to be a destination for those eager to fulfil particular needs. According to Visit Svalbard (2019b), tourists are mostly seduced by the Arctic nature, the wilderness and by the opportunity of being at 78° North. However, by analysing the five stages of the Maslow's hierarchy of needs, the sum up of all levels of this theory provided a

complete study of the respondents' needs that drove them to travel to Longyearbyen in order to re-establish their inner equilibrium.

Starting from the 'physiological needs', the first level of the Maslow's pyramid, regarding the Arctic climate, the cold was either a concern for some or an attraction for others. Food did not represent a motivation for travelling to explore Svalbard's cuisine, but indeed, relaxation was highly valued among the interviewees, since Longyearbyen represented an optimal place for those looking for tranquillity and relax, by either being surrounded by the nature or by joining outdoor activities. As regards the second level, 'safety needs', Longyearbyen ensured complete stability in terms of social, economic and political factors. Concerning the third level, 'love and belonging', this destination was mainly chosen by couples that were looking for intimacy. Furthermore, among the interviewees, many families chose Longyearbyen as an opportunity to do different activities as they usually do as a family. For the fourth stage 'esteem', it was observed that respondents were eager to go beyond their boundaries. Talking about the fifth level, 'self-actualization', it was found that respondents were aiming to have unique and challenging experiences by the exploration of the own capabilities. On the last level of Maslow's theory, peak experiences came also into consideration. It was found that travelling to the northernmost destination on Earth was a way of adventuring to the experience of a lifetime, by triggering a rush of adrenaline at a destination that is ruled by uncertainty due to the extreme weather conditions.

Besides, regarding the analysis of the travel career ladder of the interviewees according to Pearce's model, it was found that most of them have already visited a long list of countries and were, therefore, well-travelled people. Moreover, some showed enthusiasm by sharing the exact number of countries they have been to, as it was expressed by those described themselves as 'citizens of the world', or by those that have travelled to the five continents. Thus, according to the participants' travel experience, Longyearbyen was perceived as a proper destination meant for those that give value to features that fulfil the self-actualization level of needs, at the top of Maslow's theory. However, there were also respondents that, although they have already travelled to many other places before, they just wanted to relax in the northernmost place in the world. As well, there were some respondents that were eager to sate a particular need, sometimes a hobby such as hiking. In that way, travelling was the consequence of the need to pursue a pattern to concrete a desire.

Following the analysis of travel motivations, push and pull factors were analysed as a way of studying deeper the attributes that Longyearbyen has that motivates people willing to satisfy their needs. Therefore, according to the seven push motivations described by Crompton, regarding the first one, 'escape from the mundane environment', Longyearbyen represented to be an ideal destination for those wanting to escape from big and stressful cities. Analysing the second motivation, 'exploration and evaluation of self', it was found that Longyearbyen involves facing certain risky situations that push tourists to their limits as regards their own capacities. The third push factor, 'relaxation', it represented an

interesting point to study, since the majority of tourists interviewed were looking for tranquillity either in the surrounding nature or by joining outdoor activities. 'Prestige', the fourth push motivation, was expressed by those respondents eager to raise their self-esteem by having the chance of visiting a place that is still not known by many. According to the fifth push motivation, 'regression', it was perceived that the setting of the High Arctic made respondents increase their desire to experience those sensations and emotions that they do not have on their daily life, as for example, by participating in activities such as snowmobiling. Regarding the sixth motivation, 'enhancement of kinship relationships', this one represented an important push motivation, since it was observed that respondents were eager to strengthen bonds either with their family or partner. Lastly, by analysing the seventh push factor named 'facilitation of social interaction', even though all outdoor activities in Longyearbyen were organized in groups by default, the chance of being able to interact with others, was not considered a travel motivation among interviewees.

With regard to the attractiveness of Longyearbyen, according to the first pull factor described by Crompton, 'novelty' was associated with the fact that this destination has unique fauna, phenomena and natural attractions that make it interesting to explore. Furthermore, the second pull motivation, 'education' was represented by the importance that participants gave to the phenomenon of the Northern Lights, the most popular activity among respondents. As well, the Arctic fauna was a subject of attention, since those tourists interviewed were eager to learn about polar bears and Arctic foxes. Although the dark season was already over when face-to-face interviews were conducted at the destination, there was still interest in learning about the twilight, that is, the period when the sun is not visible and does not reach the horizon, but it illuminates the Earth surface providing blue colours to the surrounding landscape.

According to interviewees' expectations, for a great number of them, natural attractions were perceived as a high valued aspect of Longyearbyen. This was translated as the wish to have a successful experience in chasing the Northern Lights or by getting the most out of any of the attractions that the High Arctic does offer, such as the possibility of spotting some of the Arctic fauna or by having a fairy-tale winter with lots of snow. However, due to the fact that most of the respondents spent an average of four days at the destination, expectations were sometimes not met, since some outdoor activities are subjected to weather conditions. Thus, some tours might be cancelled, or the Northern Lights may not appear. As well, the expensiveness of this destination was a factor that raised the anxiety among interviewees, since it woke up the need of willing to have the most successful trip they could possibly have.

It has also been found along the interviews conducted, that there are still misconceptions that need to be about life and tourism in the High Arctic. It was commonly believed that no life could possibly exist at those high latitudes. Longyearbyen and the archipelago of Svalbard was perceived as an uninhabited and isolated place, a white scenario full of snow and ice

with the presence of some wild animals like polar bears. As a result of this, respondents had the misconception of thinking that the northern, the less developed. However, these radical thinking were expressed by those that did not ever have a close encounter with the Far North. However, for those that have already been to the Arctic or have at least investigated about the destination before, they did have a more realistic panorama of how life in the High Arctic is.

In relation to the second research question, Social Media played an important role in the motivation to travel to Longyearbyen, especially among respondents in their mid-20s and mid-30s. Indeed, some respondents did admit that Social Media had a strong influence in their decision-making process of the trip. For some respondents, Social Media represented a platform for getting ideas to travel, but for others, it gave enough reasons to motivate them to go to Longyearbyen. Social Media proved to have a vast quantity of visual information, where users can appreciate images of the destination thanks to the posts of other tourists. Some respondents have even started following hashtags on Instagram before their trip. In this way, their news feed was constantly updated with the pictures uploaded by the ones currently at the destination. Therefore, this source served them to get inspired and to shorten the gap between what they previously imagined and how is the reality at this destination. Even more, for some respondents, Instagram represented the platform where they discovered the existence of the archipelago of Svalbard, while for others, it was their curiosity that drove them to find this destination unexpectedly while surfing on the Internet.

As regards the travel fear of missing out, some isolated cases showed that the need of travelling to Longyearbyen was awakened immediately after those respondents had seen a picture on Instagram. This urgent need of going there was fomented either by its beautiful attributes, or by the fact of being a destination threatened by the global warming effects. Finally, Social Media also helped to debunk misconceptions. Instagram showed to be a reliable source for those that are curious to get visual information about this destination. An important number of interviewees got surprised by the pictures seen on Instagram, where Longyearbyen was shown as a colourful town surrounded by beautiful landscapes. For this reason, the perception of an isolated place on the last edge of the world was changed to the concept of a modern town that has all facilities and a beautiful wildlife to explore.

Finally, as for the limitations, this study was carried out during the months of February and March 2019, with the exception of some particular interviews conducted via Instagram to tourists that travelled in January of the same year. This means that future studies could take into account the whole winter season, in order to identify if there are common patterns among travellers that choose the coldest season to get their needs fulfilled at the last inhabited place before the North Pole. Moreover, due to the fact that the High Arctic changes dramatically between winter and summertime in terms of vegetation, fauna, flora and weather temperatures, it would be interested to carry out the same study during the months of summer, so as to understand how each season sates different types of needs.

Furthermore, since tourism on Svalbard is nowadays one of the main activities on the archipelago, this is a call to protect one of the most vulnerable places on Earth. Tourism is highly responsible for the effects of the climate changes on the ecosystem of Svalbard. This issue put Svalbard in the spotlight of the news, causing a counterproductive effect, since it attracts tourists that are anxious to visit a place that is in danger of ceasing to exist. Therefore, this concern represents an invitation to put into action ‘responsustable’ measures, meaning to implement a “responsible tourism behaviour based on the concept of sustainable tourism” (Mihalič, 2016, p. 461). With regard to future travellers, Svalbard needs to stop being seen as a hedonic destination for seeking pleasure and relaxation. For this reason, it would be interesting to repeat this research in the next 5 or 10 years, in order to analyse if travel motivations have changed, due to the fact of being Svalbard an endangered destination, and to observe if tourists are becoming more aware of their responsibility by doing tourism there.

Lastly, due to the rapid growth of tourism in Longyearbyen, local authorities should raise awareness of the fact that Longyearbyen could possibly experience overtourism in a near future. It is important to bear in mind that this town has 2,150 inhabitants, and a rich population of polar bears that extends to 3,000 in the whole archipelago of Svalbard. Finally, this is a call to pass new regulations and laws to set up quotas to all companies providing outdoor activities, in order to preserve the surroundings of Longyearbyen and the whole archipelago of Svalbard. Finally, the rapid growth of tourism at this destination could be slowed down by applying a strict control to all new businesses and tourism investors that aim to take advantage of the tourism in Longyearbyen.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Exploratory conversations

Table 3: Notes taken from conversations with guides, assistants and lectures at the University Centre in Svalbard.

	Contact	Place or Type of excursion	Field notes
1	Airbnb host	A tour around the town by car	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Airbnb host has been living in Longyearbyen since 2001. She is Norwegian, from the south of Norway, and her decision to come to this town, was because of the high salaries. She was looking for a peaceful place, and the first thing she fell in love with was the dark season. She said that most of the people that live here love this season the most, because it is a moment of tranquillity, where everyone can connect with themselves. • The host explains the rapid change the town has suffered environmentally speaking. The fiord next to the house used to be completely frozen ten years ago, and now, it is possible to see that is not anymore. The polar ice caps have retreated and therefore, that has forced the polar bears to go beyond the places they usually go for hunting. That is the cause why polar bears have been encountered near the centre of the town. • She has seen many times the Northern Lights, especially during the dark season, when it can be seen in the middle of the day, since it is dark 24 hours. • The host parks her car outside the house, and since temperatures are freezing (between -20° and -30°C), she connects her car with an electric power system that makes the ventilation of the car work as well as the engine. Otherwise, the engine would freeze, and to restart the car, would take longer. • She explains that, since the electric station is just next to the house, they have never had any problems regarding the heating and hot water. The latter one comes directly from the station 24 hours a day. • All the pumps in the city are above the surface, because the soil is permafrost, meaning that it is

			<p>completely frozen, so pipes are heated to prevent being frozen during the cold winter.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The town was built as a community. It is small but it is well developed, and it has good infrastructure and services. • Tourism has increased enormously in the last years, especially during summertime, when cruises arrive and population triples during the day. • It is a tradition to take off the shoes when entering a house or an office. This is due to the fact that in old times, coal miners used to arrive from work, and in order to not get the house dirty, that tradition has been implemented from then on.
2	Receptionist	Mary-Ann's Polarrigg	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hurtigruten is the biggest company in Svalbard. It does control almost every single tourism activity in the island. Therefore, she doesn't recommend taking any of their excursions. • In the last years, small companies and start-up have emerged, and since they provide customized-services offered to small groups, they have better reviews on TripAdvisor than other big tourism companies offering tour to larger groups of tourists.
3	Bus driver	Svalbard Buss og Taxi AS - Sightseeing with a local expert around Longyearbyen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The guide has been living in Longyearbyen for 18 years. • He talks about the history of Longyearbyen as a coal mine town, the low taxes that people pay (16% is taken from the salary), and how dangerous are polar bears during the dark season, since it is not possible to see enough to spot them if they are on the way. • There are 50 nationalities living in Longyearbyen. He also talks about Mr. Longyear, an American business man that arrived in 1901 and founded the coal mine number 1. The name of the city was given after him. • The tells that the most important building in the town is the energy station, named in Norwegian "Energiverket", that provides the hot water and electricity to the whole town. All kind of

			<p>containers come from Tromsø (mainland Norway) to provide food and supply. In the town hall there are 40 people working right now, and the Governor of Svalbard is a woman.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burials are not permitted in Longyearbyen. If anyone wants to be buried there, the only possibility is to be cremated in mainland Norway. Then, ashes can be brought back to Svalbard.
4	Professor	University Centre in Svalbard – Northern Lights’ lectures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the beginning, before this phenomenon was studied by the science, it was believed that Northern Lights were a bad sign. Indigenous people thought it was connected to bad spirits. Therefore, people were afraid of them. • When there are very strong Northern Lights, a cracking sound can be heard. • The scientific name of Northern lights is ‘Aurora Borealis’, used for the first time by Galileo Galilei. It means ‘the dawn of the north’, because he only saw the colour red of the Northern Lights (Brekke, 2019). • In 1230, the first book refers to the Northern Lights. • The Northern Lights are caused by particles precipitations of the sun. • Auroras are made of plasma. They are at an altitude of 100 km. • Svalbard is the best place for dayside Aurora. For nightside, it moves to 68°, meaning that it is better and most probable to see it in Tromsø. • Auroras can be seen between a 1,000 and 1,300 km away from the Magnetic Pole. Norway, Sweden Finland, Russia, Canada, Greenland, Iceland and Alaska are the countries where this phenomenon can be seen at high latitudes, that means, where the Arctic circle begins. The difference among all those places lies on the fact that it is Norway the country that has the best infrastructure among other towns at the same latitude in other Arctic regions. • Links to check the forecast of the Northern Lights in Longyearbyen:

			<p>https://www.spaceweatherlive.com, to see the Aurora oval around the globe;</p> <p>https://www.tv2.no/storm/nordlys/, to see the Aurora oval over Scandinavia; and</p> <p>http://kho.unis.no/kho_sony.htm to see in real time the Auroral oval over Longyearbyen. The latter one is a website and application made by the Aurora Observatory named Kjell Henriksen Observatory (KHO), located in Longyearbyen.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was Copernicus the one that placed the Sun in the centre of the universe. • Prominences of the sun are important for the Northern Lights' phenomenon. • The KP index is the scale for geomagnetic storms that measures the intensity of an Aurora. The scale goes from 0 to 9, being 9 the strongest level of intensity. • The Magnetic Pole is moving fast, but the Geomagnetic Pole is moving slowly, so Auroras will not disappear or move to the south (Brekke, 2019). • Northern Norway represents one of the best countries to study the phenomenon of the Northern Lights, especially with the radars and the Aurora observatory in Longyearbyen. • It is the gases of the Earth that gives the colour to the Auroras, from green to yellow, red, pink, white and blue. • Calculated from the surface of the Earth, the extension of the Aurora goes between 80 to 250 km up. • Some tips for spotting the Northern Lights: away from the city, since the light pollution does not allow to distinguish the intensity of the colours, to have clear skies, before midnight, and avoiding full moon. Always bring a tripod to take a nice shot, since cameras should be set up with an exposure of between 8 to 30 seconds, depending on the intensity of the Aurora. • It has to be borne in mind that the colours that are captured by a camera are always more intense
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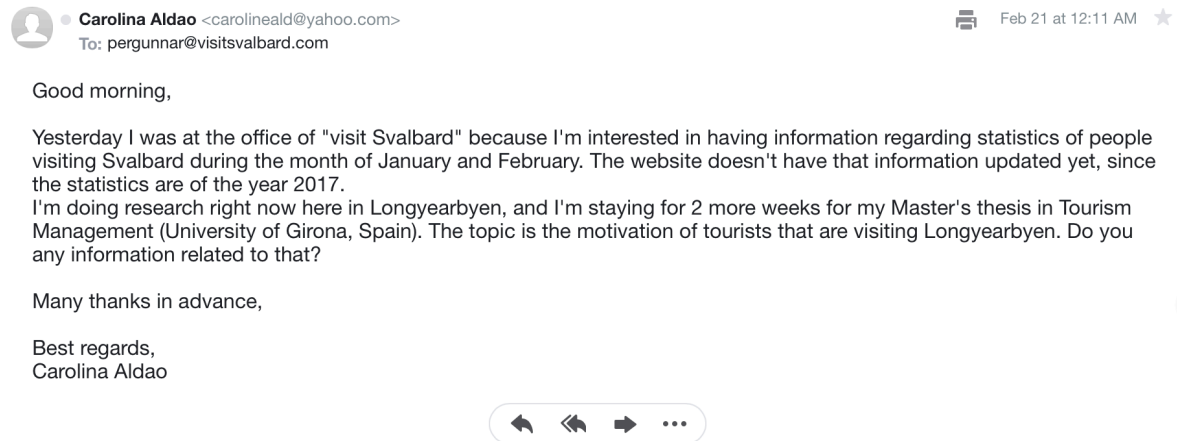
			<p>than those captured by the human eye (Brekke, 2019*).</p> <p>* Dr. Prof. Pål Brekke is a Norwegian professor, specialized in solar physics and astrophysics, that works at the Norwegian Space Centre in Oslo. He is a guest lecturer at the University Centre in Svalbard for the course 'The Stormy Sun and the Northern Lights' that is offered each February to students and the whole community of Longyearbyen. This course has the participation of Prof. Fred Sigernes, chief of the Kjell Henriksen Observatory (KHO).</p>
5	Bus driver	Arctic Tapas AS - Hunting the Auroras by bus	<p>Talking to the bus driver, who was at the same time the guide of the tour, the researcher realised that it was the same guy followed on Instagram. He is an American guy, in his mid-30s, from Ohio. His name is Benjamin Vidmar, and at the same time he runs his business in Polar Permaculture, growing fresh vegetables for the island, he also works as a driver for the company 'Arctic Tapas', where they combine the concept of the Spanish tapas (like appetizers) with the concept of typical Arctic food.</p> <p>Before all the tourists were allowed to get off the bus, the driver had to check if there were polar bears in the proximity. It is important to mention that all guides should be armed at all the excursion made outside the town.</p>
6	Receptionist	Tourism office 'Visit Svalbard'	<p>The researcher went to the Destination Management Organization's office of <i>Visit Svalbard</i>, in order to contact a representative of tourism, to ask if they could provide any information related to statistics of tourists coming to visit Longyearbyen, as well as to know if they could add some interesting facts about tourist motivations. An e-mail address was facilitated to talk to the responsible for statistics, and the information given was the same shown on the website of Visit Svalbard, regarding the statistics of tourists' arrivals and overnights between 2017 and 2018, as shown in Appendix 2.</p>
7	Guide	Hurtigruten Svalbard - A hike into the glacier with	<p>This guide was explaining how the ice cave changes seasonally. Sometimes, because of the climate change, it melts quickly, and therefore, it rains inside the cave causing floods. Each time a group of people leaves a</p>

		snow cat transport	cave, the guide has to check previously if there are polar bears nearby.
8	Guide	Store Norske Spitsbergen Kulkompani - Coal mine number 3 Museum	<p>In the group of tourists, there was a former coal miner worker, that worked in the same mine 30 years ago. All the information provided in the tour was given from the point of view of the former worker and the guide, sometimes confusing a bit the audience.</p> <p>One of the anecdotes the guides told, was about a former worker. One day, he forgot to put back the metal badge with his name on the wallboard when leaving the coal mine. His boss called him and forced him to come back and leave it in its place. This is because the main wallboard gives a reference of the people inside the mine at the moment. Therefore, if an accident occurs, it is possible to know who was inside the mine at that moment.</p>
9	Guide	Arctic Adventures - Ice cave tour with snowmobile transport	<p>The guide was a German man in his early 30s, that did an exchange at the University Centre in Svalbard three years ago. Since then, he stayed in Longyearbyen working as a guide. He is an oceanographer and environmental activist. She explained to us that climate changing is occurring fast in this part of the planet, that ice caps are melting, and that harming the fauna and flora of Svalbard.</p> <p>He also claimed that most of the young people living in Longyearbyen are seasonal workers, and most of locals don't live for an entire life in the island. On average, people just spend eight years of their lives on this island.</p>
10	Assistant	North Pole Expedition Museum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The receptionist is an Italian girl that is 24 years old. She is a seasonal worker from Milan, that arrives to Longyearbyen each January to work for six months as an assistant of the owner of this museum, who is also an Italian, and the owner of the tourism company 'Poli Arctici'. • According to the assistant, tourists are coming mainly from Norway, the United States, New Zealand, Australia, England, France, Germany and Eastern Europe.

Source: own illustration

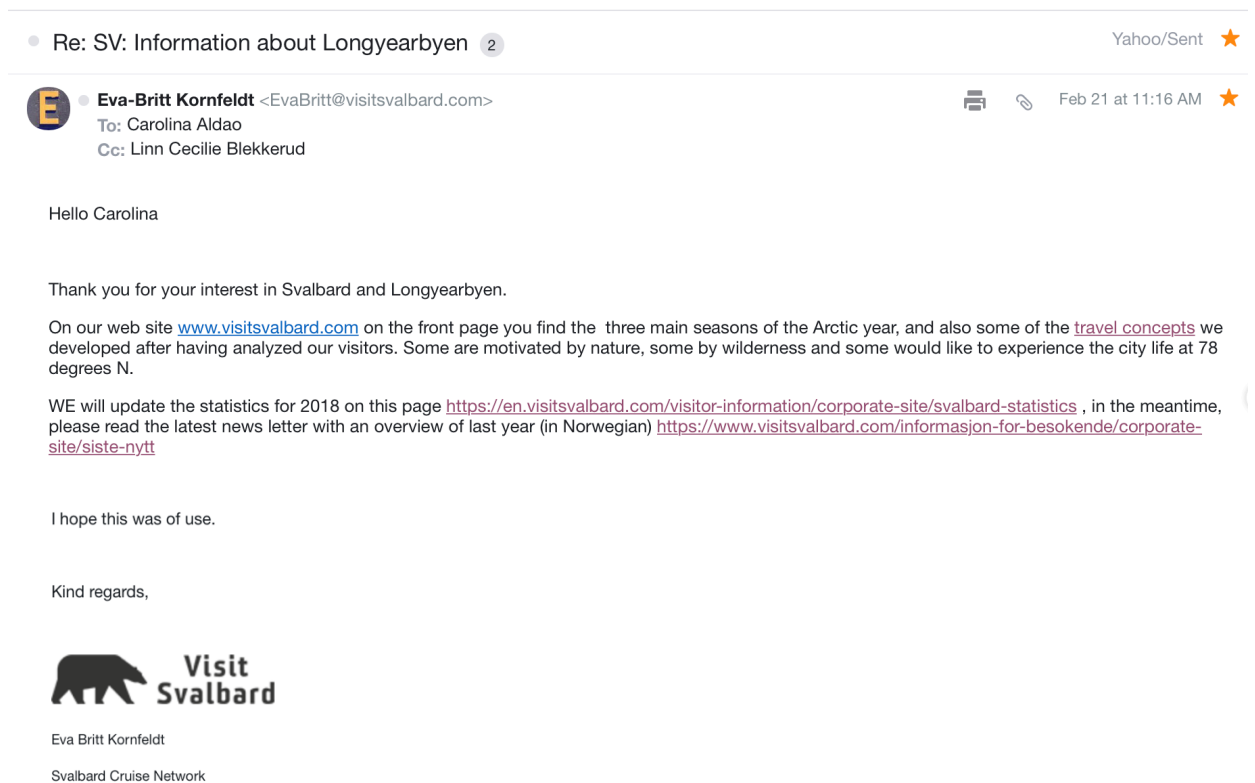
Appendix 2: Tourism statistics in Longyearbyen

Figure 8: E-mail to Svalbard's Destination Marketing Organization regarding tourism statistics in Longyearbyen



Source: Visit Svalbard

Figure 9: E-mail response from Svalbard's Destination Marketing Organization regarding tourism statistics and motivations to visit Longyearbyen



Source: Visit Svalbard

Table 4: Longyearbyen's overnights between 2008 and 2018

Gjestedøgn/overnight stays hotels and guesthouses in Longyearbyen (ex. camping)

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Mai	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Okt	Nov	Des	Periode
2008	1945	5977	8296	13559	9724	12786	14927	13392	5691	2916	1548	1239	92 000
2009	1501	4231	8431	11492	8110	10998	13740	12801	5016	2612	1972	1403	82 307
2010	1522	4937	8650	11219	7107	10672	13722	11673	6127	3547	1786	1869	82 831
2011	1231	5288	9458	12181	8882	9136	11574	12701	7538	3710	1982	2104	85 785
2012	2169	4772	8249	11239	7599	10403	12354	12419	6909	3827	2462	2241	84 643
2013	2600	5589	12067	14499	10069	12388	15277	15364	7459	5109	3194	3481	107 096
2014	3550	7525	14164	14107	11238	12244	17821	15857	8871	5543	3356	4183	118 459
2015*	4360	10121	15260	17186	12261	13483	15872	14453	10298	6705	3886	4778	128 663
2016*	6664	11803	14664	17248	11970	15378	17937	14798	9443	7490	5724	6403	139 522
2017*	7849	13207	14829	17803	12668	16143	17485	15689	10077	8032	5546	5962	145 290
2018	6687	14291	17438	17700	13490	16922	18065	17293	11724	8883	7108	6640	156 241
17 vs 18	-15 %	8 %	18 %	-1 %	6 %	5 %	3 %	10 %	16 %	11 %	28 %	11 %	7,5 %

Source: Visit Svalbard, 2019b

Table 5: Longyearbyen's arrivals between 2008 and 2018

Ankomne gjester / guest arrivals in Longyearbyen (ex. camping)

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Mai	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Okt	Nov	Des	Total
2008	921	2255	2902	5752	3672	6262	7646	6674	2317	1187	650	799	41 037
2009	550	1579	2940	4438	2842	4488	6296	5660	2159	929	781	537	33 199
2010	539	1866	3033	4238	2687	4818	6906	5377	2726	1195	705	662	34 752
2011	411	1858	3592	4813	3282	3686	5188	6763	3067	1451	928	846	35 885
2012	841	1773	2896	4041	2988	4815	6570	6935	2823	1459	1166	846	37 153
2013	1004	2432	4485	6127	3854	5032	7011	7141	2891	1883	1278	1507	44 645
2014	1433	2740	4804	5787	4125	6404	7755	8546	3492	2105	1368	1606	50 165
2015	1721	3401	6726	7652	4886	7383	9565	8430	4263	2642	1580	1767	60 016
2016	2442	4568	5687	7925	5067	7936	10223	8895	4611	2959	2329	2588	65 230
2017	3352	5157	6245	7219	5584	8222	9869	8833	5086	3141	2417	2221	67 346
2018	2603	6138	6532	7527	6147	9330	9965	8991	5655	3446	3301	2909	72 544
17 vs 18	-22 %	19 %	5 %	4 %	10 %	13 %	1 %	2 %	11 %	10 %	37 %	31 %	7,7 %

* Does include camping facilities

Source: Visit Svalbard, 2019b

Table 6: Number of arrivals in Longyearbyen according to nationalities, January – May, 2017 & 2018

Gjestedøgn Longyearbyen; pr nasjon periode januar - mai 2018

Land	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Mai		2017	2018	Diff	Utvikling
Norge	3299	9178	11623	12692	7930		46094	44722	-1372	-3 %
Sverige	373	433	626	962	1243		2791	3637	846	30 %
Tyskland	196	658	616	452	672		2009	2594	585	29 %
UK	457	744	1119	472	521		2688	3313	625	23 %
Andre land	437	204	214	96	88		2349	1039	-1310	-56 %
USA	183	230	221	466	268		1455	1368	-87	-6 %
Frankrike	174	227	308	360	476		1425	1545	120	8 %
Nederland	81	366	264	198	213		965	1122	157	16 %
Russland	65	28	41	168	23		2264	325	-1939	-86 %
Italia	131	244	185	160	164		761	884	123	16 %
Danmark	243	197	291	113	307		983	1151	168	17 %
Sveits	71	218	262	202	213		538	966	428	80 %
Asia ellers	144	185	266	141	126		793	862	69	9 %
Kina	163	302	104	118	78		412	765	353	86 %
Polen	69	47	123	105	200		435	544	109	25 %
Spania	82	129	383	196	32		557	822	265	48 %
Australia	124	202	111	75	94		472	606	134	28 %
Belgia	40	102	148	153	178		420	621	201	48 %
Finland	8	49	57	127	126		447	367	-80	-18 %
Europa ellers	18	27	6	82	82		442	215	-227	-51 %

*Norge = Norway; Sverige = Sweden; Tyskland = Germany; UK = United Kingdom; Andre land = other countries; USA = United States of America; Frankrike = France; Nederland = The Netherlands; Russland = Russia; Italia = Italy; Danmark = Denmark; Sveits = Switzerland; Asia ellers = Asian countries; Kina = China; Polen = Poland; Spania = Spain; Belgia = Belgium

Source: Visit Svalbard, 2019b

Appendix 3: List of face-to-face and Instagram interview participants

Table 7: Interview participants

Code	Type of interview	Type of transcription	Country of origin	Number of participants	Month of the visit
T1	In-depth face-to-face interview	Edited transcription*	Switzerland	2	February, 2019
T2	In-depth face-to-face interview	Edited transcription	United States	1	February, 2019
T3	In-depth face-to-face interview	Edited transcription	Italy	3	February, 2019
T4	In-depth face-to-face interview	Edited transcription	United States	2	February, 2019
T5	In-depth face-to-face interview	Edited transcription	The Netherlands	2	February, 2019
T6	In-depth face-to-face interview	Edited transcription	Russia	2	February, 2019
T7	In-depth face-to-face interview	Edited transcription	United States	2	February, 2019
T8	In-depth face-to-face interview	Edited transcription	Belarus & Switzerland	2	February, 2019
T9	In-depth face-to-face interview	Edited transcription	Norway	4	February, 2019
T10	In-depth face-to-face interview	Edited transcription	Norway	4	February, 2019
T11	In-depth face-to-face interview	Edited transcription	The United States	2	February, 2019
T12	In-depth face-to-face interview	Edited transcription	The United Kingdom	2	February, 2019
T13	In-depth face-to-face interview	Edited transcription	Brazil	2	February, 2019
T14	In-depth face-to-face interview	Edited transcription	India	1	February, 2019
T15	In-depth face-to-face interview	Notes taken during the interview	The United Kingdom	2	February, 2019
T16	In-depth face-to-face interview	Notes taken during the interview	Greece	2	February, 2019

T17	In-depth face-to-face interview	Notes taken during the interview	Italy	3	February, 2019
T18	In-depth face-to-face interview	Notes taken during the interview	The whole world	2	February, 2019
T19	In-depth face-to-face interview	Notes taken during the interview	France	3	February, 2019
T20	In-depth face-to-face interview	Notes taken during the interview	France	2	February, 2019
T21	In-depth face-to-face interview	Notes taken during the interview	France	1	February, 2019
T22	In-depth face-to-face interview	Notes taken during the interview	Norway	2	February, 2019
T23	In-depth face-to-face interview	Notes taken during the interview	Spain	3	February, 2019
T24	In-depth face-to-face interview	Notes taken during the interview	Spain	2	February, 2019
T25	In-depth face-to-face interview	Notes taken during the interview	Italy & Spain	2	February, 2019
T26	In-depth face-to-face interview	Notes taken during the interview	The United States & The Netherlands	4	March, 2019
T27	In-depth face-to-face interview	Notes taken during the interview	Alaska	2	March, 2019
T28	In-depth face-to-face interview	Notes taken during the interview	Sardinia	1	March, 2019
T29	In-depth interview via Instagram private message	Edited transcription	Germany	2	March, 2019

T30	In-depth interview via Instagram private message	Edited transcription	Ireland	1	January, 2019
T31	In-depth interview via Instagram private message	Edited transcription	Argentina	2	January, 2019
T32	In-depth interview via Instagram private message	Edited transcription	Turkey	1	January, 2019
T33	In-depth interview via Instagram private message	Edited transcription	Turkey	1	January, 2019
T34	In-depth interview via Instagram private message	Edited transcription	Norway	1	January, 2019
T35	In-depth interview via Instagram private message	Edited transcription	Norway	1	January, 2019
T36	In-depth interview via Instagram private message	Edited transcription	The United Kingdom	1	January, 2019
T37	In-depth interview via Instagram private message	Edited transcription	Norway	1	February, 2019
T38	In-depth interview via Instagram private message	Edited transcription	Ireland	2	February, 2019
T39	In-depth interview via Instagram private message	Edited transcription	The Netherlands	1	February, 2019

T40	In-depth interview via Instagram private message	Edited transcription	Denmark	5	February, 2019
T41	In-depth interview via Instagram private message	Edited transcription	Italy	2	February, 2019
T42	In-depth interview via Instagram private message	Edited transcription	The United States	1	February, 2019
T43	In-depth interview via Instagram private message	Edited transcription	Sweden	1	February, 2019
T44	In-depth interview via Instagram private message	Edited transcription	Ukraine	1	February, 2019
T45	In-depth interview via Instagram private message	Edited transcription	Norway	1	February, 2019
T46	In-depth interview via Instagram private message	Edited transcription	Italy	1	February, 2019
T47	In-depth interview via Instagram private message	Edited transcription	Thailand	2	March, 2019
T48	In-depth interview via Instagram private message	Edited transcription	Norway	2	March, 2019
T49	In-depth interview via Instagram private message	Edited transcription	China	Might be 6	March, 2019

T50	In-depth interview via Instagram private message	Edited transcription	Norway	1	March, 2019
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*Edited transcription means that not every spoken word is exactly transcribed. Some parts are omitted, and only the most important information is kept.

Source: own illustration

Appendix 4: In-depth face-to-face interviews

Table 8: Face-to-face interview to tourist #T1

	Questions	Answers
0	Place	At the sightseeing tour by bus around Longyearbyen
1	Travelling with whom	As a couple
2	Nationality	From Switzerland, living in Lugano
3	Age	In their early 40s
4	Profession	The man is a teacher at Primary school. His wife is a nurse.
5	Month of the visit	February, 2018
6	Length of stay in Longyearbyen	Five days
7	How did you know about Longyearbyen for the first time?	“We have always looked for new places looking for mountain and peace. Since we are from Switzerland, we wanted to explore more by going a bit further, and by chance, I discovered Svalbard on the Internet, and here we are”, the woman replies
8	What has attracted you the most to come to visit Longyearbyen?	“The extreme winter. We are from Switzerland. We are used to see snow, and we have cold days there. But here (Longyearbyen) is different. We wanted to experience a different winter”, the man replies
9	Why did you choose to come here instead of going to a heavenly beach in the Caribbean, for example?	“As I said before, we love to explore new places, so, we thought of having a different kind of experience. We are from Switzerland, and we love winter and snow, so we chose of having that but up north”, the man replies
10	What were your main motivations of this trip?	“To see the huskies in their nature, to explore, and to see remote places like Barentsburg (a small Russian community)”, the man replies
11	Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip?	“No, we discovered the place by accident on the Internet. I am not interested in Social Media”, the man replies
12	Did you have any fears and worries before coming here?	“We were a bit afraid of leaving our kids at home, but temperatures were not ok for them, so we chose to come on our own”, the woman replies
13	What kind of activities are you doing here?	“We will do dog sledding through the valley; visit Longyearbyen and we will do an excursion to Barentsburg”, the woman replies

14	In your whole life, to how many countries have you travelled to approximately?	“In the whole world? We haven’t counted it. Maybe between 12 and 15. We usually travel around Europe. But we have been to the States also. Most of the times we go by car to France, Italy, northern Spain, to the mountains, and to Cote d’Azur during summertime”, the man replies
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Source: own illustration

Table 9: Face-to-face interview to tourist #T2

	Questions	Answers
0	Place	At the night tour to hunt the Northern Lights
1	Travelling with whom	Solo traveller
2	Nationality	From the United States, living in Washington
3	Age	34 years old
4	Profession	Biomedical engineer
5	Month of the visit	February, 2019
6	Length of stay in Longyearbyen	Four days
7	How did you know about Longyearbyen for the first time?	“Actually, Social Media helped. I looked up some things related to Northern Norway, and I saw pictures of Longyearbyen, so I started looking up for information, and I wrote to some people that posted pictures on Instagram”
8	What has attracted you the most to come to visit Longyearbyen?	“Because it is the furthest north that you can go, close to the North Pole. That, since it is also kind of rustic and isolated, that encouraged me to come here”
9	Why did you choose to come here instead of going to a heavenly beach in the Caribbean, for example?	“Because this time I wanted to reach remote areas of the Arctic, to discover something authentic in a kind of unspoiled spot of the world”
10	What were your main motivations of this trip?	“To see the Northern Lights and to see the Arctic nature. I have just seen the Northern Lights one time from the airplane, but they were not bright enough, so I’m hoping to see them again”.
11	Did Social Media make any influence	“Definitely”

	on the decision of this trip?	
12	Did your perception of Longyearbyen change after seeing pictures or videos posted on Social Media?	“Yes, absolutely. I didn’t have any idea how the Far North could be. The pictures I saw were absolutely different of what was in my mind”
13	Did you have any fears and worries before coming here?	“No, I wanted to be surprised, so I didn’t think much about being worried. I didn’t have any expectations, to make the trip more exciting”
14	What kind of activities are you doing here?	“I’m a lazy adventurous girl, so I travel a lot, but I don’t take many excursions. This time I’m just taking this excursion to see the Northern Lights, tomorrow I’m taking a half day trip to see the huskies, and I’m planning to visit the Svalbard Museum”
15	In your whole life, to how many countries have you travelled to approximately?	“I would say 20 countries. I have explored a lot of Europe, northern America and the Pacific”

Source: own illustration

Table 10: Face-to-face interview to tourist #T3

	Questions	Answers
0	Place	At the night tour to hunt the Northern Lights
1	Travelling with whom	Three friends (two women and one man)
2	Nationality	From Italy, living in Milan
3	Age	Between 25 and 32 years old
4	Profession	Physics master’s students, and a web developer
5	Month of the visit	February, 2018
6	Length of stay in Longyearbyen	Four days
7	How did you know about Longyearbyen for the first time?	“We wanted to go to Norway to see the Northern Lights. We have asked people and they told us that it was better to go really north. She (one of the women) has also seen some Northern Lights pictures posted from here, so we googled Northern Lights and Svalbard also appeared!”.

8	What has attracted you the most to come to visit Longyearbyen?	“The Northern Lights and the huskies. Also, the nature because it is all covered in snow. We knew that here it was possible to do more activities than in other places in Norway”
9	Why did you choose to come here instead of going to a heavenly beach in the Caribbean, for example?	“Because in the Caribbean you don’t have the possibility of seeing the Northern Lights. There you can find places that are really crowded, and for this trip, we wanted to go to places not crowded at all”
10	What were your main motivations of this trip?	“To see the Northern Lights and to see the huskies”
11	Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip?	“I am the one that saw pictures on Instagram! (one of the girls – the one that is 25 years old), so I told them (the other 2 friends) that Longyearbyen should be a place to see the Northern Lights”
12	Did your perception of Longyearbyen change after seeing pictures or videos posted on Social Media?	“I fell in love with this place by seeing so many pictures of the Northern Lights, polar bears and dogs. I didn’t know that there was the possibility to do so many things near the North Pole”, the 25 years old’s girl replies
13	Did you have any fears and worries before coming here?	“The cold. We are from Milan. There, we never have this cold, so I was worried if I had enough clothes to come here (one of the girls, who is 25 years)”
14	What kind of activities are you doing here?	“We are doing this excursion to see the Northern Lights. Tomorrow, we will do a hike to enter in a cave, and also, dog sledding”
15	In your whole life, to how many countries have you travelled to approximately?	“We haven’t travelled much as a group. But for example, I know countries like Peru, Brazil, the United States, and many places in Europe, like Spain, France, Germany, Austria, Poland, Hungary, the Balkans like Slovenia and Croatia. Also, Bosnia and Malta. Also, Russia, Japan, Australia, Fiji, New Zealand”, replied one of the women

Source: own illustration

Table 11: Face-to-face interview to tourist #T4

	Questions	Answers
0	Place	At the night tour to hunt the Northern Lights
1	Travelling with whom	Two friends (two women)
2	Nationality	From the United States, living in Washington
3	Age	In their early 40s
4	Profession	Space physicians
5	Month of the visit	February, 2019
6	Length of stay in Longyearbyen	One week
7	How did you know about Longyearbyen for the first time?	“We came here to work. I work in the Space Telescope Science Institute, and she joined me for this trip”
8	What has attracted you the most to come to visit Longyearbyen?	(The ‘invited friend’ replies) “I wanted to come here because this place is the northernmost one in the world. There is nothing northern than this”
9	What were your main motivations of this trip?	(The ‘invited’ friend replies) “I have never been that north, and I always wanted to see the Northern Lights. It is curious that here, it gets completely dark during wintertime, and you can experience twilight during February”
10	Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip?	(The ‘invited’ friend replies). “Not actually. It was her (her friend) that proposed me to come here. We are space physicians, and Svalbard has implemented many technologies as regards satellites and observatories”
11	Did you have any fears and worries before coming here?	“The cold. At home it snows, and it gets quite cold, but not as much as here. We have heard about frostbites and that polar bears represented a threat”
12	What kind of activities are you doing here?	“Not much. I have to work”. The ‘invited’ friend replies “Well, I will go to the centre and walk around. We are having this excursion (to chase the Northern Lights), and we are thinking of taking a dog sledding tour, weather permitting”
13	In your whole life, to how many countries have you travelled to approximately?	“I have travelled to many places in the United States and also in Canada. I have also visited many cities in Europe, and I have been recently in Russia and China with the Trans-Siberian train”, one of the friends replied.

Source: own illustration

Table 12: Face-to-face interview to tourist #T5

	Questions	Answers
0	Place	At the night tour to hunt the Northern Lights
1	Travelling with whom	As a couple
2	Nationality	From the Netherlands, living in Antwerp
3	Age	In their mid-30s
4	Profession	House wife and the husband, works at a bank
5	Month of the visit	February, 2019
6	Length of stay in Longyearbyen	Four days
7	How did you know about Longyearbyen for the first time?	“We have done a trip to Lapland last year, and the same travel agency that organized us the tour, was organizing trips to Svalbard”
8	What has attracted you the most to come to visit Longyearbyen?	“That Longyearbyen is the northernmost town. We wanted to have some relaxing days away from the stress of the city, and enjoy the nature and attractions that only here can be done”
9	Why did you choose to come here instead of going to a heavenly beach in the Caribbean, for example?	“Because here you have intimacy, you can experience connection with the nature. You can have the experience of being just yourself and the surrounding nature. In the Caribbean, for example, you can find nice beaches, but you won’t find the calmness and peace that you find here”
10*	What was the main aim of this trip in relation to yourself?	“To come to a place that up north, and to be in a place surrounded by wild nature and polar bears. To be in a place where we can connect with ourselves”
11	Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip?	“No, we don’t use much Social Media. We don’t have enough time, because we have children”
12	Did you have any fears and worries before coming here?	“To be far away from our kids, in a place that looks so north in the world, and we have a bit of fear of the cold, and to have snow storms that could cancel the excursions”
13	What kind of activities are you doing here?	(Besides this excursion to chase the Northern Lights) “We have made reservations at a company that is doing dog sledding tours, and with them, we will do an excursion to an ice cave. We wanted to see the huskies in their real environment and to see the nature, that by snowmobile, you cannot experience that much, because you have to pay attention when you drive”

14	In your whole life, to how many countries have you travelled to approximately?	“As a couple, we have made many short travels around Europe, before our children were born. We have been to many places in the Netherlands, England, Scotland, Ireland, Faroe Islands, Belgium, all Scandinavia, a bit of Russia (Saint Petersburg), and some countries of Eastern Europe. Outside Europa, I have visited Mexico and the United States twice”
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* Question 10 was changed from “What were your main motivations of this trip?” to “What was the main aim of this trip in relation to yourself?”

Source: own illustration

Table 13: Face-to-face interview to tourist #T6

	Questions	Answers
0	Place	At the night tour to hunt the Northern Lights
1	Travelling with whom	As a couple
2	Nationality	From Russia, living in Moscow
3	Age	Both 35 years old
4	Profession	He is a chef, and she helps her father in his business.
5	Month of the visit	February, 2019
6	Length of stay in Longyearbyen	Five days
7	How did you know about Longyearbyen for the first time?	The husband replies: “One day I was looking for Russian places outside Russia, and I started googling it, and I discovered that there were small towns like Barentsburg and Pyramiden here (in Svalbard)”
8	What has attracted you the most to come to visit Longyearbyen?	“The curiosity to visit the two Russian communities, and to see the Northern Lights”
9	Why did you choose to come here instead of going to a heavenly beach in the Caribbean, for example?	“Because we were curious to see Russian settlements outside Russia, and we found it here”
10	What was the main aim of this trip in relation to yourself?	“To look for wild nature, polar bears in their natural habitat, and a natural phenomenon, such as the Northern Lights”

11	Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip?	The woman replies: “I have a Russian contact on Facebook that has once posted something that was speaking about the climate change, but then I forgot about it, and I don’t remember if it was here”
12	Did you have any fears and worries before coming here?	“No, we are used to the cold, and the only worry can be to have the polar bears really close to us” (the woman replies)
13	What kind of activities are you doing here?	“Apart from this excursion, we did yesterday the tour that went to Barentsburg by snowmobile, and we are thinking of planning a tour with dog sledding tomorrow” (the Northern Lights’ one)
14	In your whole life, to how many countries have you travelled to approximately?	“Not so many countries. We used to travel to Siberia during summertime. Then, we went to China once, Mongolia, Thailand, and of Europe, we have been to Finland, Sweden, Germany, Poland, Czech Republic and Belarus”

Source: own illustration

Table 14: Face-to-face interview to tourist #T7

	Questions	Answers
0	Place	At the night tour to hunt the Northern Lights
1	Travelling with whom	As a couple
2	Nationality	From the United States, living in New York
3	Age	28 and 31 years old
4	Profession	Both chemicals engineers
5	Month of the visit	February, 2019
6	Length of stay in Longyearbyen	One week
7	How did you know about Longyearbyen for the first time?	The man replies: “We were travelling with Norwegian (the airline) from Los Angeles to Barcelona, and I was reading the magazine of the airline, and I came across with an article that was promoting Longyearbyen as the northernmost town in the world. That word “northernmost” was the hook for making me read the whole article, and that is why we are here”
8	What has attracted you the most to come to visit Longyearbyen?	“That it is close to the North Pole. In America (the USA) there is nothing similar to this, and Longyearbyen is in the latitude 78°, and it is the last inhabitant place before the North Pole”, the man replies

9	Why did you choose to come here instead of going to a heavenly beach in the Caribbean, for example?	“We were motivated to reach the top of the world”, the man replies
10	What was the main aim of this trip in relation to yourself?	“To experience the mystery of the North Pole. Not many people know about the Arctic and this world is still unknown for many. That is why we wanted to be the first ones to discover it and tell our friends our experience here, unless we are eaten by a polar bear hehe”, the man replies
11	Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip?	<p>“I use Instagram for posting some nice shots, but we didn’t know the place through any platform”, the man replies</p> <p>The woman replies: “In my case, when we decided to come here, I started following some hashtags of Longyearbyen and Svalbard, so I could get closer to this place”</p>
12	Did your perception of Longyearbyen change after seeing pictures or videos posted on Social Media?	“Yes, I was fascinated how well organized the town was, with a lot of travel agencies and companies that were organizing all kind of activities”, the woman replies
13	Did you have any fears and worries before coming here?	“Yes, we knew that it was going to be extremely cold. We are from New York, but still, these temperatures that we are having right now, we never get them at home. I didn’t know if I would have enough layers of cloth, but I realized that every single company here (in Longyearbyen) was providing with special winter suits when you are joining a tour, as well as a hot meal, if it is a full day excursion”, the woman replies
14	What kind of activities are you doing here?	<p>“The highlight of our trip will be to drive a snowmobile. I’m so excited about this” (the woman replies). “We also made a tour to cuddle the huskies and to do a full day sled trip”</p> <p>“Well, in my case, I had huge expectations to see the Northern Lights, but it seems that this is not the day”, the woman replies</p>
15	In your whole life, to how many countries have you travelled to approximately?	“We travel quite often. We have been to many countries in Europe, could be around 9, some countries in Asia, specifically 4, and many countries in South America, because there we spent 2 months travelling”

Source: own illustration

Table 15: Face-to-face interview to tourist #T8

	Questions	Answers
0	Place	At the night tour to hunt the Northern Lights
1	Travelling with whom	As a couple
2	Nationality	She is from Belarus. He is from Switzerland. Both live in Zurich
3	Age	30 and 35 years old
4	Profession	She is a Master student in biology, and he works at a hotel in Zurich
5	Month of the visit	February, 2019
6	Length of stay in Longyearbyen	One week
7	How did you know about Longyearbyen for the first time?	The man replies: "We are ski lovers, but we have always skied in Switzerland. We knew about this place because of some friends that came here, so we wanted to do ski here, but we couldn't find any ski resort"
8	What has attracted you the most to come to visit Longyearbyen?	"That it is the top of the world, and a meeting point for adventurous people"
9	What was the main aim of this trip in relation to yourself?	"To challenge us to go beyond our limits, to discover new things, to explore the virgin nature, and to look if we could find any place where we could ski"
10	Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip?	The woman replies: "I use Instagram a lot. When we were curious to know more about Longyearbyen, I started following several pages where I saw wonderful pictures"
11	Did your perception of Longyearbyen change after seeing pictures or videos posted on Social Media?	"Yes, I became really excited by all those pictures showing the stunning nature", the woman replies
12	Did you have any fears and worries before coming here?	The man replies: "Our only fear was that we knew that there were no ski resorts. However, we took the decision to come here, and explore ourselves. We are doing cross country skiing instead. We found a place where it is possible to ski, but right now, there is a risk of avalanche". The woman replies: "I was worried to be disappointed, because we knew that Longyearbyen was not the best place to go to ski,

		but we fell in love with so many pictures that we saw on Instagram and on Internet, that we finally came here. Some Instagram users said that this place was magical, unique, and that it is the experience of a lifetime”
13	What kind of activities are you doing here?	“Besides this excursion to see the Northern Lights, we are also going to Barentsburg (a small Russian coal mine community), because she wants to see a Russian place here, and a half-day sled trip”
14	In your whole life, to how many countries have you travelled to approximately?	“We have been to Belarus to visit her family, to Russia, Czech Republic, Romania, Bulgaria, Serbia, Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Norway and Sweden, Estonia, Turkey, Uzbekistan, Jordan, Singapore, and Indonesia. In America, we know Canada”

Source: own illustration

Table 16: Face-to-face interview to tourist #T9

	Questions	Answers
0	Place	At the night tour to hunt the Northern Lights
1	Travelling with whom	A family of four
2	Nationality	From Norway, living in Oslo
3	Age	In the early 40s. The children are 6 and 8 years old
4	Profession	He is a pharmacist. She didn't reply
5	Month of the visit	February, 2019
6	Length of stay in Longyearbyen	Four days
7	How did you know about Longyearbyen for the first time?	“We are Norwegians, but anyways, for us it is not common to go to this part of Norway. It is a bit far away from the typical places that we go for vacations. But we wanted to do something different with the kids this time”
8	What has attracted you the most to come to visit Longyearbyen?	“My kids wanted to see the Northern Lights, and to see animals. Here there are polar bears, and some foxes. We hope to see them”
9	Why did you choose to come here instead of going to a heavenly beach in	“There are unique things here that you can't see in the Caribbean. Here you have different species of animals that only here can be found. Here you have the Northern Lights”

	the Caribbean, for example?	
10	What was the main aim of this trip in relation to yourself?	“We wanted to go a bit further than we usually do. We are from Oslo, and we always take vacations during summertime, and we go to our mom’s house, which is in the countryside. But this time, we wanted to see this part of Norway that is still not so known among us”
11	Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip?	“No. We don’t follow much Social Media. We just saw some promotion from the Ministry of tourism of Norway, and we searched for more information on Internet”
12	Did you have any fears and worries before coming here?	The woman replied: “I was a bit afraid of the cold, especially for the youngest of my kids. That is why he is waiting inside the bus” (the same bus that left everybody in the place to spot the Northern Lights)”
13	What kind of activities are you doing here?	“We are here to see the Northern Lights, hopefully. We did yesterday the tour with the dogs (dog sledding), and not much more. With the kids, it is quite complicated to do more activities, and my husband forgot the driving license, so, we can’t take a snowmobile safari” (the woman replies)
14	In your whole life, to how many countries have you travelled to approximately?	“We usually travel around Norway or Scandinavia. We have been to Great Britain and Spain, some parts of France, Italy and Germany, but that was before we got married. Since the kids were born, we didn’t travel much”

Source: own illustration

Table 17: Face-to-face interview to tourist #T10

	Questions	Answers
0	Place	At the night tour to hunt the Northern Lights
1	Travelling with whom	A family of four
2	Nationality	From Norway, living in Stavanger
3	Age	Parents, in their early 50s, and the two kids, 18 and 21 years old.
4	Profession	Both parents are teachers at Primary school
5	Month of the visit	February, 2019
6	Length of stay in Longyearbyen	Five days

7	How did you know about Longyearbyen for the first time?	“We are from Stavanger, and recently we have heard much about Svalbard and the polar bears”
8	What has attracted you the most to come to visit Longyearbyen?	“We are from the south of Norway, so we wanted to experience the real winter” (the father replies)
9	Why did you choose to come here instead of going to a heavenly beach in the Caribbean, for example?	“Here it is closer than the Caribbean, and we wanted to know a bit more of our country and see different things, like the Northern Lights and the really cold winter”
10	What was the main aim of this trip in relation to yourself?	“To have a family trip and get to see other things that is not possible in the south of Norway”
11	Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip?	“My son (the one that is 21 years old) is addicted to Instagram, and he has seen a lot of pictures there. But we didn’t organize the trip because of Instagram. We decided to come here because it was the northernmost part of Norway”
12	Did your perception of Longyearbyen change after seeing pictures or videos posted on Social Media?	“Yes, I didn’t know that there were so many animals here”, the child replies
13	Did you have any fears and worries before coming here?	“No, because we are Norwegians”
14	What kind of activities are you doing here?	“We took this excursion to see the Northern Lights. Yesterday we went on an organized trip with the huskies (dog sledding), and tomorrow we are going to the Svalbard Museum”
15	In your whole life, to how many countries have you travelled to approximately?	“We do many road trips around Scandinavia, especially in Norway, but before we got married, we travelled to Central America together, the Caribbean (Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic and Cuba), also Mexico and Peru. We were once in New Zealand and Australia”

Source: own illustration

Table 18: Face-to-face interview to tourist #T11

	Questions	Answers
0	Place	At the Svalbard Museum
1	Travelling with whom	Two friends
2	Nationality	From the United States, living in New York
3	Age	28 and 34 years old.
4	Profession	Wedding planner and receptionist at a hotel
5	Month of the visit	February, 2019
6	Length of stay in Longyearbyen	Three days
7	How did you know about Longyearbyen for the first time?	“We have travelled a lot around the world. We have been to the five continents, and this time we wanted to go to Antarctica, but by doing some research, we discovered that to get there was extremely expensive, so we started thinking for an alternative, and we discovered Longyearbyen, as the northernmost town in the world”
8	What has attracted you the most to come to visit Longyearbyen?	“The cold, to be in such a remote place, so far away from the civilization, in the middle of nowhere, surrounded by nature and polar bears”
9	Why did you choose to come here instead of going to a heavenly beach in the Caribbean, for example?	“I would say that we wanted to experience just the opposite as beaches. As I said before, to be far away from the civilization, to explore a still unspoiled area to find peace. To be in the wildest part of the Arctic”
10	What was the main aim of this trip in relation to yourself?	“To explore more of the world, hidden places. To go to a place where little is known, and where mother nature governs”
11	Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip?	“Quite a lot. We are always following journalists and hashtags related to different places around the world, and after discovering Svalbard, we were amazed by the pictures shown on Instagram”
12	Did your perception of Longyearbyen change after seeing pictures or videos posted on Social Media?	“Well, I imagined an isolated place, and after having seen so many pictures of Longyearbyen, I realized that it wouldn’t be such a risky trip as I thought before”

13	Did you have any fears and worries before coming here?	“We were worried about the cold. We have been checking the temperatures, and we have seen that they were hitting -25° C, and we thought that we were not going to be prepared for this”.
14	What kind of activities are you doing here?	“Two days ago, we did a full-day trip to the East coast by snowmobile to have the opportunity to have a close encounter with polar bears, but they didn’t appear. Yesterday, we walked a bit around the city, we went to the church, to souvenir shops, and to the North Pole Expedition Museum”
15	In your whole life, to how many countries have you travelled to approximately?	“I have counted around 30 countries around the world”, the man replies

Source: own illustration

Table 19: Face-to-face interview to tourist #T12

	Questions	Answers
0	Place	At the Svalbard Museum
1	Travelling with whom	Two friends
2	Nationality	From the United Kingdom, living in London
3	Age	In their early 40s
4	Profession	Accountant and the other one is a photographer
5	Month of the visit	February, 2019
6	Length of stay in Longyearbyen	Four days
7	How did you know about Longyearbyen for the first time?	“We knew about Longyearbyen because our travel agency that organized our trip to Lapland last year, was organizing expeditions to the Arctic”
8*	Does your trip include any other destination?	“Yes, we are also heading to Oslo, to spend there two nights before going back home”
9	What has attracted you the most to come to visit Longyearbyen?	“The wilderness, the untouched nature, the opportunity to have the best (photography) shots” (answers the photographer)

10	What was the main aim of this trip in relation to yourself?	“To be in contact with the nature, to experience the peaceful nature, and to feel a rush of adrenaline by participating at a snowmobile excursion”
11	Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip?	“Not really, since we discovered this place thanks to this travel agency”
12	Did you have any fears and worries before coming here?	“The weather (answers the photographer). I was willing to get good pictures for my business, and the Arctic does always have unstable weather, and that is something that no one can control”
13	What kind of activities are you doing here?	“We already did the excursion the Svea gruva (a coal mine in the near of Longyearbyen) by snowmobile, dog sledding, and a hike to the ice cave. Today is our last day”
14	In your whole life, to how many countries have you travelled to approximately?	The photographer answers: “To approximately 30 countries, especially in Europe, the United States and Hawaii, and other countries in Africa, such as South Africa, Tanzania and Egypt. Countries in Asia, like India, Nepal, Myanmar, Thailand, China, Kazakhstan, Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia”

* Question number 8 was added to the interview.

Source: own illustration

Table 20: Face-to-face interview to tourist #T13

	Questions	Answers
0	Place	At the Svalbard Museum
1	Travelling with whom	As a couple
2	Nationality	He is Brazilian and she is from Uruguay. Both live in Aracaju (Brazil)
3	Age	In their late 40s
4	Profession	Scuba diver instructor, and she is a pastry chef
5	Month of the visit	February, 2019
6	Length of stay in Longyearbyen	Four days
7	How did you know about Longyearbyen for the first time?	“We knew about this place from a book from Amyr Klink (a Brazilian writer and explorer). In his book he talks about his expedition to Antarctica, where he also shares the contrast between the South Pole and the North Pole. It is there where we discovered Svalbard”.

8	Does your trip include any other destination?	“Yes, we came from Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) with Tap Portugal (the airline), so we stayed two days there in Lisbon, and then, we stayed two more days in Oslo before coming here”
9	What has attracted you the most to come to visit Longyearbyen?	“The unique nature, the chance to see the polar bears, and the Northern Lights”
10	What was the main aim of this trip in relation to yourself?	“To challenge ourselves and experience a bit being Amyr Klink. We were enchanted by his stories about the North Pole and Antarctica, and even though we are closer to Antarctica than Svalbard, it was much cheaper to come here”
11	Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip?	“No, we don’t use Social Media”
12	Did you have any fears and worries before coming here?	“I was afraid of being so away from my children. In Brazil nobody knows about this place, and nobody thinks that there are people living so up north. This place is still unknown, especially for people like us that live so far away”
13	What kind of activities are you doing here?	“Today, we were supposed to do an excursion by snowmobile, but we were tired, and I didn’t feel quite well (the woman answers). That is why we came here to spend the afternoon at this museum (the Svalbard Museum). Yesterday, we did an excursion with the dogs (dog sledding)”
14	Would you consider Longyearbyen the highlight of your trip?	“Yes, the whole trip was planned to spend the most of it in Svalbard”
15	In your whole life, to how many countries have you travelled to approximately?	“To many places in Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, Bolivia, Peru and Colombia. In Europe we have been to Spain, France, Italy, Germany, Portugal, England, to the fiords in Norway, to Estonia and Latvia, to Russia, and in Asia to China”

* Question number 14 was added to the interview

Source: own illustration

Table 21: Face-to-face interview to tourist #T14

	Questions	Answers
0	Place	At the Svalbard Museum
1	Travelling with whom	Solo traveller
2	Nationality	From India (Agra), living in Berlin
3	Age	35 years old
4	Profession	Marine biologist
5	Month of the visit	February, 2019
6	Length of stay in Longyearbyen	Two days
7	How did you know about Longyearbyen for the first time?	“I am a marine biologist, and I am studying how the climate change affects the marine biodiversity. I came here because of research purposes. I knew about Svalbard, because I had a professor at my University in Hong Kong that was referring several times about the richness of the wide diversity of (marine) species here in Svalbard”
8	Does your trip include any other destination?	“I just came here to Longyearbyen for two days, and I have spent other two days in Oslo”
9	What has attracted you the most to come to visit Longyearbyen?	“I have always felt attracted by the extreme cold weather and the Arctic. Besides this, I am here because of research purposes. I love travelling, and I have visited the five continents, and the north pole was in my bucket list”
10	What was the main aim of this trip in relation to yourself?	“To investigate the marine life in a place so close to the north pole. As a marine biologist, this trip represents a challenge, because I am meeting the international director of the Norwegian Polar Institute (Dr. Prof. Kim Holmen)”
11	Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip?	“No. I am a researcher. I don’t have time for Social Media”
12	Did you have any fears and worries before coming here?	“No. I was really excited to come here, especially to meet Prof. Holmen. This is a short trip”
13	What kind of activities are you doing here?	“I am just visiting the museum here in Longyearbyen (the Svalbard Museum and the North Pole Expedition Museum) to know about the history of this place, and all the expeditioners that once came here. I am meeting Prof. Holmen, and that is all”

14	Would you consider Longyearbyen the highlight of your trip?	“Definitely. I came to Svalbard for a specific reason, and I was in Oslo because it was just on the way”
15	In your whole life, to how many countries have you travelled to approximately?	“Due to research I travelled to many countries, China, South Korea, Japan, Singapore, Philippines, many countries in Europe, especially within Germany. To my home country many times, and to North America”

Source: own illustration

Table 22: Face-to-face interview to tourist #T15 – Transcripts from notes

	Questions	Answers
0	Place	On the way to Villmarkssenter, a dog yard place
1	Travelling with whom	As a couple
2	Nationality	From the United Kingdom, living in London
3	Age	She is 45 and he is 60 years old
4	Profession	She is a Librarian, and he is an economist
5	Month of the visit	February, 2019
6	Length of stay in Longyearbyen	Six days
7	How did you know about Longyearbyen for the first time?	They were looking on the Internet for places Far North, and Longyearbyen, as the northernmost town in the world, just showed up
8	Does your trip include any other destination?	Yes, their trip includes four days in Tromsø (northern mainland Norway), and the Lofoten Islands.
9	What has attracted you the most to come to visit Longyearbyen?	The possibility to explore the peaceful wilderness and to see the Northern Lights
10	What was the main aim of this trip in relation to yourself?	They wanted to relax at a ‘not crowded’ and ‘not busy’ place. To be far away from big towns, pollution, noises, and where nature could be close to their hotel
11	Did Social Media make any influence	No. They used the Internet for research purposes

	on the decision of this trip?	
12	Did you have any fears and worries before coming here?	No, they have travelled to many places, as well as Murmansk (a Russian city where in wintertime there are also extreme cold temperatures), so, the cold was not a problem for them.
13	What kind of activities are you doing here?	They made reservations for two consecutive nights to have the chance to spot the Northern Lights. Besides, they visit the main two museums in the town (The Svalbard Museum and the North Pole Expedition Museum), and they do some shopping to buy souvenirs at shops
14	Would you consider Longyearbyen the highlight of your trip?	They do. Even though they loved the Lofoten Islands, they fell in love with some unique features of Svalbard, such as the sense of community that Longyearbyen has, meaning, that the town itself has everything that one might need in order to have a high standard of life. Longyearbyen really surprised them, because they did not expect that such a small town would be so developed both for locals and tourists
15	In your whole life, to how many countries have you travelled to approximately?	They visited the 5 continents, but Antarctica is still on their bucket list. They have been to places like the whole Great Britain, Iceland, the Mediterranean, Scandinavia, Eastern Europe. Also, the United Arab Emirates, Oman and Qatar. Russia, Southeast Asia, and the Pacific, including Fiji

Source: own illustration

Table 23: Face-to-face interview to tourist #T16 – Transcripts from notes

	Questions	Answers
0	Place	Coal mine number 3 museum
1	Travelling with whom	As a couple
2	Nationality	From Greece, living in Athens
3	Age	In their early 30s
4	Profession	He is a mechanical engineer and she is a freelance graphic designer
5	Month of the visit	February, 2019
6	Length of stay in Longyearbyen	Six days

7	How did you know about Longyearbyen for the first time?	Both were once just playing with google maps, looking for remote places. Just clicking on the map, they discovered that there was a town really on the top of the world, and therefore, they discovered the town of Longyearbyen
8	How did you imagine Longyearbyen before knowing about this place?*	They have never imagined that life could exist so up north. They just thought that it was just ice and iceberg all around. But never imagined that there would be people living here
9	What has attracted you the most to come to visit Longyearbyen?	They like cold places. Since they live in Greece, they are used to the Mediterranean weather, the sun and good climate. Therefore, they wanted to experience just the opposite
10	What was the main aim of this trip in relation to yourself?	To challenge themselves to go so Far North, to a place that none of their relatives have heard before, and to face extreme weather conditions. Also, the chance to see the Northern Lights and the end of the Polar Nights
11	Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip?	Not exactly. They discovered the place playing with google maps, but afterwards, the woman started following hashtags related to Longyearbyen on Instagram
12	Did you have any fears and worries before coming here?	Even though they like the cold, they were a bit afraid of the extreme temperatures that can be found in Longyearbyen, as well as the avalanches. They have read that the risk of avalanche is quite high. Therefore, they booked a hotel near the fiord, since they read that there was an avalanche in January 2015 that destroyed many houses that were at the base of the mountains. Therefore, they are not taking part of tours that organize hikes to the top of the mountains
13	What kind of activities are you doing here?	They did a full day excursion by dog sledding through the valley, and they are planning to do another full day excursion by snowmobile to Barentsburg (the Russian coal mine community). They also had a typical trapper's dinner where they enjoyed Arctic delicatessen (run by Basecamp Explorer, the owner of one of the dog yards)
14	Would you consider Longyearbyen the highlight of your trip?	Definitely. They just came here to Longyearbyen to experience the Arctic in-depth

15	Does your trip include any other destination?	No. They just made a stop in Barcelona and Oslo to do the connecting flight to Longyearbyen from Athens
16	In your whole life, to how many countries have you travelled to approximately?	Maybe between 12 and 15, replied the man

*Question number 8 was added to the interview.

Source: own illustration

Table 24: Face-to-face interview to tourist #T17 – Transcripts from notes

	Questions	Answers
0	Place	In the pedestrian street, when they asked me to take them a picture
1	Travelling with whom	Three friends
2	Nationality	From Italy, living in Turin
3	Age	In their mid-50s
4	Profession	Engineers
5	Month of the visit	February, 2019
6	Length of stay in Longyearbyen	Three days
7	How did you know about Longyearbyen for the first time?	They were looking for places Far North in Norway, since they were planning a trip around Great Britain and Norway, and by doing research in Google, they found Svalbard as the last inhabited place on earth
8	How did you imagine Longyearbyen before knowing about this place?	They didn't know about Svalbard before, and none of their friends and relatives did. It was a huge surprise, because they thought that there was no life here so Far North
9	What has attracted you the most to come to visit Longyearbyen?	They have always felt attracted by the cold, and north places, because of the unique phenomena like freezing temperatures, the Northern Lights and the Polar Nights.

10	What was the main aim of this trip in relation to yourself?	To know a place that is still unknown and to be the first ones of their friends and relatives to go there
11	Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip?	Not really. At the beginning they started looking for information at Google, and as time went by, one the friends, felt curious about Longyearbyen, and therefore, she started following some hashtags related to Svalbard
12	Did your perception of Longyearbyen change after seeing pictures or videos posted on Social Media?	The girl started seeing pictures on Instagram a bit later. Her perception changed because she couldn't imagine what a Polar Night could be. Therefore, her perception of the wintertime up there changed
13	Did you have any fears and worries before coming here?	The only fear was, if the trip to Longyearbyen was going to represent an increase in the price of the whole trip, because they have already seen that prices to stay in Longyearbyen are really high, and there are not many accommodation options. That is why they just stayed three days
14	What kind of activities are you doing here?	Since they are in Longyearbyen for three days, they just participated at a half day dog sledding tour, and another half day tour by snowmobile to the surroundings of the town
15	Would you consider Longyearbyen the highlight of your trip?	They cannot say that in advance, before they are at the beginning of the trip. London was their first destination before coming to Longyearbyen. Therefore, the trip is not aimed for just visiting Longyearbyen
16	Does your trip include any other destination?	Yes, they started the trip in London. After visiting Longyearbyen, they are heading to the Faroe Islands, and then, Edinburgh (Scotland)
17	In your whole life, to how many countries have you travelled to approximately?	To quite a lot of countries, one of the friends replies. He loves travelling. He has been to South America, to countries like Brazil, Colombia, Argentina and Chile. Then, to Panama and Costa Rica, to the United States and Canada. In Europe, to more than 10 countries, and in Asia, to the whole South East part

Source: own illustration

Table 25: Face-to-face interview to tourist #T18 – Transcripts from notes

	Questions	Answers
0	Place	The Radisson hotel (four-star hotel)

1	Travelling with whom	Two friends that were travelling with other 20 workmates
2	Nationality	Denmark and Mexico
3	Age	In their mid-30s
4	Profession	Sale department at a company that sells home appliances
5	Month of the visit	February, 2019
6	Length of stay in Longyearbyen	Three days
7	How did you know about Longyearbyen for the first time?	They discovered the place because the company they work for rewards their workers according to their sales, and this time, their company chose Svalbard as the destination
8	How did you imagine Longyearbyen before knowing about this place?	These two friends didn't have many expectations, since they did not organize the trip. However, they imagined the place as remote, tough and deserted
9	What has attracted you the most to come to visit Longyearbyen?	To have the chance to see animals in their natural habitat, such as polar bears and huskies
10	What was the main aim of this trip in relation to yourself?	To experience being in such a remote and cold place, and to face storms and strong winds. They were excited to use the balaclava (the mask that covers the face), and they were laughing between each other because they were saying that they felt like a 'Michelin toy' with so many layers of cloth
11	Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip?	No. They just came here thanks to their company. They didn't even do much research before the trip
12	Did you have any fears and worries before coming here?	The cold. The girl from Mexico has never been to such a cold place, and never been so far away from their home. She was worried that they would not enjoy the trip because of the cold
13	What kind of activities are you doing here?	They already did the dog sledding tour, and that night, they were going to have a typical Arctic dinner at a trapper's station. They were excited to try seal and reindeer meat
14	Would you consider Longyearbyen the highlight of your trip?	Yes, because the trip was made with the purpose of just being in Svalbard

15	Does your trip include any other destination?	No, each of the workmates flew from their town to Longyearbyen
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Source: own illustration

Table 26: Face-to-face interview to tourist #T19 – Transcripts from notes

	Questions	Answers
0	Place	The Radisson Hotel
1	Travelling with whom	A family of three
2	Nationality	From France, living in Marseille
3	Age	He father in his mid-60s and the sons, 18 and 32 years old
4	Profession	The father is a web developer
5	Month of the visit	February, 2019
6	Length of stay in Longyearbyen	One week
7	How did you know about Longyearbyen for the first time?	For them, to be in Svalbard is a dream come true. They already knew this place because they love reading books about expeditions, and they are especially interested in the Norwegian Polar explorer Roald Amundsen
8	How did you imagine Longyearbyen before knowing about this place?	They have planned this trip really carefully. They had high expectations on this trip, since from Longyearbyen there are a lot of hiking trails
9	What has attracted you the most to come to visit Longyearbyen?	The possibility of doing hiking in the northernmost place in the world. They have done a lot of hiking trails around the world, but in order to come to Longyearbyen, they had to save a lot of money first. Longyearbyen represents for them one of the most expensive places they have been to, since they only found one hostel in the whole town, and still, prices are much more expensive than other hostels in any other part of the world. Besides, the hikes had to be planned in advance, because of the risk of avalanches
10	Why did you choose to come here instead of going to a heavenly beach in	They are looking for feeling a rush of adrenaline, to experience a bit of risk in a remote place

	the Caribbean, for example?	
11	What was the main aim of this trip in relation to yourself?	To finally make their dream come true, after so many years of saving money and organizing the trip. They are really happy and excited they are making it
12	Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip?	The youngest son is following some explorers on Instagram, so he got some inspiration from them
13	Did your perception of Longyearbyen change after seeing pictures or videos posted on Social Media?	The youngest son was following Paco Nadal, a Spanish explorer. He loved the way how he made a video on Instagram about the facilities in Longyearbyen, and that he also warned people about polar bears, which he didn't know that they were so dangerous
14	Did you have any fears and worries before coming here?	They were worried about the bad weather. They knew that climate is an issue in the Arctic, and that suddenly conditions can change from one second to the other. Storms trigger avalanches, so they have to be really careful
15	What kind of activities are you doing here?	They came to Longyearbyen just to hike, to the fiords and mountains
16	Would you consider Longyearbyen the highlight of your trip?	Definitely. Since so much expectations, money invested and so much planning in advance, they have dreamt of this place for long time ago
17	Does your trip include any other destination?	No, they just made a connecting flight in Oslo
18	In your whole life, to how many countries have you travelled to approximately?	They have been doing hiking in Peru, Argentina, Chile, many countries in Europe. Then, the United States, China, Nepal, Bhutan, Tanzania and New Zealand

Source: own illustration

Table 27: Face-to-face interview to tourist #T20 – Transcripts from notes

	Questions	Answers
0	Place	The Radisson Hotel

1	Travelling with whom	As a couple
2	Nationality	From France, living in Paris
3	Age	In their early 40s
4	Profession	He works for the auditing company KPMG, and she is a housewife
5	Month of the visit	February, 2019
6	Length of stay in Longyearbyen	Ten days
7	How did you know about Longyearbyen for the first time?	They discovered the place by looking up on the Internet for the northernmost places in the world, and Longyearbyen showed up. At the same time, they were looking for the best places in the world to see the Northern Lights, and they found that during some months of the winter time, it was possible to see the Northern Lights during the 'day', since it gets dark 24 hours a day
8	How did you imagine Longyearbyen before knowing about this place?	They imagined this place plenty of snow, uninhabited, polar bears wandering around, but they finally realized that this town is well developed, and is not isolated at all
9	What has attracted you the most to come to visit Longyearbyen?	They were looking for the best places for the Aurora hunting (the Northern Lights). At the same time, since they love skiing, they were looking for some ski resorts, but they ended up not finding any. Therefore, to drive a snowmobile was their alternative
10	What was the main aim of this trip in relation to yourself?	To experience the real Arctic, by feeling its cold temperatures, by seeing the Northern Lights, and spot some polar bears. To find peace and to be away from a big populated city, replies the woman
11	Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip?	Not really. They just made some research on TripAdvisor, but they do not use neither Instagram nor Facebook
12	Did you have any fears and worries before coming here?	The woman had the fear of being caught by a big storm, as happened at the end of January 2019, when a big storm hit Longyearbyen, with a wind speed that reached 100 km/h.
13	What kind of activities are you doing here?	The main goal of the trip is to chase the Northern Lights. That is why they booked two tours in advance, to have more chances of seeing it. Besides, they are planning to do a full day excursion to Tempelfjorden by snowmobile, and trying to see if there is the chance of at least do some cross-country skiing

14	Would you consider Longyearbyen the highlight of your trip?	Yes, since the aim of the whole trip was just being in Svalbard, in the real Arctic
15	Does your trip include any other destination?	No, they just caught the connection in Oslo in order to arrive to Longyearbyen
16	In your whole life, to how many countries have you travelled to approximately?	They have been all around Europe, quite a lot of countries of Central and South America. They haven't discovered Asia and the Pacific yet, but they went to India.

Source: own illustration

Table 28: Face-to-face interview to tourist #T21 – Transcripts from notes

	Questions	Answers
0	Place	Hurtigruten excursion to an ice cave in the mountain
1	Travelling with whom	Solo traveller
2	Nationality	From France, living in Paris
3	Age	33 years old
4	Profession	Photographer
5	Month of the visit	February, 2019
6	Length of stay in Longyearbyen	One week
7	How did you know about Longyearbyen for the first time?	She wanted to reach the top of the world, to explore the Far North within the Arctic circle, to be at an extreme and remote place and to the northernmost possible place in the world. She discovered Longyearbyen because she was following a fashion maker on Instagram that has been there
8	How did you imagine Longyearbyen before knowing about this place?	She imagined this place like a 'white scenario', just kilometres and kilometres of snow, completely uninhabited and peaceful, dark in the night, and windy
9	What has attracted you the most to	To have the possibility to explore the northernmost corner of the world, to feel a real wintertime with snow, windy storms, and

	come to visit Longyearbyen?	contemplate the nature peacefully without the sound of cars and people
10	What was the main aim of this trip in relation to yourself?	Since she is travelling on her own, this place represented the biggest challenge, because she invested a lot of money for this trip. To be so far away from her relatives, made her feel a bit isolated, because of the fact that Svalbard is an island, physically separated from mainland Norway.
11	Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip?	A 100%. She says that she is 'addicted' to a, and she follows a lot of influencers, adventure travellers and even Destination Marketing Organizations. She describes herself as a 'passionate traveller' that looks for inspiration on Social Media, but especially on Instagram
12	Did your perception of Longyearbyen change after seeing pictures or videos posted on Social Media?	Yes, from thinking that it was an isolated place to see pictures of a colourful town, polar bears that could be encountered in the outskirts of Longyearbyen, and discovering the many companies providing services there
13	Did you have any fears and worries before coming here?	To be so far away from their relatives made her feel a bit isolated, because of the fact that Svalbard is an island, physically separated from mainland Norway. Her fears were that if something was happening to her, like an accident on an excursion, she believes that her family could not be able to reach this part of the world
14	What kind of activities are you doing here?	She did already a half day dog sledding tour. The next day she was joining a hike to an ice cave in the mountains, and she also booked a full day snowmobile tour to the East coast
15	Would you consider Longyearbyen the highlight of your trip?	Yes. All the trip was organized with the aim of spending the most of her time in Svalbard
16	Does your trip include any other destination?	Yes, she is going afterwards to Tromsø, Trondheim and Oslo
17	In your whole life, to how many countries have you travelled to approximately?	She has travelled to 42 countries. She considers herself a citizen of the world

Source: own illustration

Table 29: Face-to-face interview to tourist #T22 – Transcripts from notes

	Questions	Answers
0	Place	Hurtigruten excursion to an ice cave in the mountain
1	Travelling with whom	As a couple
2	Nationality	From Norway, living in Oslo
3	Age	In the mid-30s
4	Profession	Teachers
5	Month of the visit	February, 2019
6	Length of stay in Longyearbyen	Three days
7	How did you know about Longyearbyen for the first time?	According to them, for about three years ago, the government of Norway is promoting all the north of Norway and Svalbard during wintertime, as a way of expanding the tourism that is much concentrated on the fiords of mainland Norway (especially during summertime). They were looking for to be close to the North Pole, to have the chance to see the Northern Lights and to experience the end of the Polar nights. They have seen quite a lot of advertisements in magazines and even on the tv. That is how they got enthusiastic to reach this place
8	How did you imagine Longyearbyen before knowing about this place?	Since they are Norwegians, they did have already a slender grasp of what there is so up north in their country. They knew already that it was the land of polar bears, and they knew that in Svalbard, the soil is permafrost, completely frozen
9	What has attracted you the most to come to visit Longyearbyen?	To experience the real ‘fairy-tale’ winter and have the closest possible encounter with the real Arctic, that is part of their country. To do the typical activities that people do in the snow, and to be disconnected from all the mess of the capital city (speaking about Oslo)
10	What was the main aim of this trip in relation to yourself?	To have a three-days off away from their jobs (they are teachers), and away from their children. They have two little girls. One is 4 years old the other one, just 6 months. That is why they could not stay longer in Longyearbyen. Generally speaking, they were looking for peace, intimacy and silence
11	Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip?	No. They said that they do not have any time for Social Media

12	Did you have any fears and worries before coming here?	To leave their 6-month's old daughter in mainland Norway. That is why they did not venture that much in doing risky activities because of the fact that they are parents already
13	What kind of activities are you doing here?	They just did this excursion to an ice cave in the mountain on a snow cat, and they went to the Svalbard Museum and did some shopping at souvenir shops
14	Would you consider Longyearbyen the highlight of your trip?	Yes, since they just visited Longyearbyen
15	Does your trip include any other destination?	No

Source: own illustration

Table 30: Face-to-face interview to tourist #T23 – Transcripts from notes

	Questions	Answers
0	Place	Rabalder Café (a café in the pedestrian street)
1	Travelling with whom	A family of three
2	Nationality	From Spain, living in Barcelona
3	Age	In their early 40s. Their daughter is 5 years old
4	Profession	He is a personal trainer. She didn't specify
5	Month of the visit	February, 2019
6	Length of stay in Longyearbyen	One week
7	How did you know about Longyearbyen for the first time?	They don't remember exactly when it was the first time they heard about this place, because it has been on their mind since long time ago.
8	How did you imagine Longyearbyen before knowing about this place?	They knew already that it was really close to the North Pole, the northernmost place that someone can be and explore, but they didn't imagine that the town was going to be so developed, and so 'first world country'. They claimed that the town is more developed than other small towns in other parts of Lapland
9	What has attracted you the most to come to visit Longyearbyen?	To opportunity to bring his family so Far North (the father replies), and the chance to see again the phenomenon of the Northern Lights. However, they couldn't see them, but luckily, they did on another trip to Rovaniemi the past winter. Besides, the chance of doing a dog sledding tour since their daughter was already 4 years old, and she loves animals, especially dogs.

10	What was the main aim of this trip in relation to yourself?	To have a nice 'quality time' as a family, away from a big city (since they are from Barcelona), and to give their daughter the opportunity to be in contact with the real nature, with the real Arctic, and experience a real winter
11	Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip?	Not really. The mother has been following the hashtag of Svalbard and Longyearbyen just a couple of days before the trip started
12	Did your perception of Longyearbyen change after seeing pictures or videos posted on Social Media?	Not so much, because they have investigated about the town before, and they have been to Lapland, so they imagined that Longyearbyen could be something similar
13	Did you have any fears and worries before coming here?	They were really afraid of the cold. In fact, as a family, they just did together a half-day dog sledding tour, and not any other one, because they thought that is was going to be really cold and physically demanding for their daughter
14	What kind of activities are you doing here?	The father did a full-day snowmobile excursion. All together, they joined a night tour to chase the Northern Lights, but they waited inside the bus, but still, the Northern Lights didn't appear. They also did the dog sledding tour, as already described, and they went all together to the Svalbard Museum, to show embalmed animals to their little girl, such as the polar bear, some foxes and birds
15	Would you consider Longyearbyen the highlight of your trip?	Definitely. They just came here to Svalbard on purpose to experience the Arctic
16	Does your trip include any other destination?	No. They just stayed a night in Oslo because they couldn't reach the connecting flight, since there was little time between the flight arriving at Oslo airport, and the one, going to Longyearbyen, and the other way around, on their way back home
17	Why did you choose February to come to visit Longyearbyen?*	To experience the real Arctic wintertime, and the chance to see the Northern Lights. They said that if someone wants to explore the Arctic, it has to be during wintertime, since that is representative of the real Arctic

* Question number 17 was added to the interview

Source: own illustration

Table 31: Face-to-face interview to tourist #T24 – Transcripts from notes

	Questions	Answers
0	Place	Mary-Ann's Polarrigg Hotel
1	Travelling with whom	Father and daughter
2	Nationality	From Spain, living in Madrid
3	Age	He is in his mid-50s, and the daughter is 17 years old
4	Profession	Didn't say
5	Month of the visit	February, 2019
6	Length of stay in Longyearbyen	Two days
7	How did you know about Longyearbyen for the first time?	The father was looking for destinations in the High Arctic to being able to see the Northern Lights, and he came across with Longyearbyen and Tromsø. Their intention was to travel to Tromsø, but since this trip was a last-minute decision, they saw on the forecast that Tromsø was having really bad weather, so they changed their plans and came to Longyearbyen
8	How did you imagine Longyearbyen before knowing about this place?	They were not expecting so many people and such a beautiful town so Far North. Moreover, at the beginning they didn't imagine that there were people living here. He just thought that maybe some explorer would come here by boat, and set some temporary ice camps
9	What has attracted you the most to come to visit Longyearbyen?	Their aim was to come to the northernmost possible place to being able to see the Northern Lights
10	What was the main aim of this trip in relation to yourself?	The father wanted that his daughter to experience the Arctic phenomenon of the Northern Lights
11	Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip?	No. He father doesn't have any account on any Social Media platform, and his daughter does, but she just follows some friends on Instagram
12	Did you have any fears and worries before coming here?	The bad weather was the only fear they had. Since they were tracking the bad weather that was in Tromsø at that moment, they were worried that they would experience strong snow storms that wouldn't allow them to have clear skies
13	What kind of activities are you doing here?	They just booked a night tour to chase the Northern Lights

14	Would you consider Longyearbyen the highlight of your trip?	Yes, since it is the only destination of this trip
15	Does your trip include any other destination?	No
16	Why did you choose February to come to visit Longyearbyen?	Because it is the best time to see the Northern Lights

Source: own illustration

Table 32: Face-to-face interview to tourist #T25 – Transcripts from notes

	Questions	Answers
0	Place	At a snowmobile excursion to an ice cave in the mountains
1	Travelling with whom	As a couple
2	Nationality	She is from Italy. He is from Spain, and both live in Lugano, Switzerland
3	Age	She is 35 and he is 38 years old
4	Profession	He works at a bank. She is a house wife
5	Month of the visit	February, 2019
6	Length of stay in Longyearbyen	Four days
7	How did you know about Longyearbyen for the first time?	The man found Longyearbyen by accident by having looked up on the Internet ‘the northernmost place in the world’, so, they were curious to know this place
8	How did you imagine Longyearbyen before knowing about this place?	They thought that there was just ice. They didn’t think that there would be such a populated town as Longyearbyen, with 2,100 inhabitants. That’s why they were so excited to know this place, to see how people can do a normal life there (in Longyearbyen)
9	What has attracted you the most to come to visit Longyearbyen?	The opportunity to do an adventurous excursion, such as going to ice caves in the mountains and driving a snowmobile.

10	What was the main aim of this trip in relation to yourself?	To do a different type of trip, away from cities, and far away from home (in Switzerland)
11	Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip?	Not really, since the main tool for doing research was the Internet. They did use TripAdvisor to have some knowledge of which type of accommodation would be the best for them according to prices and services offered
12	Did you have any fears and worries before coming here?	They were worried about being trapped in a snow storm. They also heard about the big storm that hit the town at the end of January 2019
13	What kind of activities are you doing here?	They did a half-day snowmobile tour in the vicinity of Longyearbyen, an Arctic dinner at the trapper's station, and they will do two excursions to two different ice caves, one on a hike excursion and the other one by snowmobile (the one they were participating when the interview was made)
14	Would you consider Longyearbyen the highlight of your trip?	Yes, since they just spent two more days in Oslo, since they had to take the connecting flight there
15	Does your trip include any other destination?	Yes, just Oslo as a stopover
16	Why did you choose February to come to visit Longyearbyen?	They wanted to do winter activities such as snowmobiling and visiting ice caves, that only during wintertime can be done

Source: own illustration

Table 33: Face-to-face interview to tourist #T26 – Transcripts from notes

	Questions	Answers
0	Place	At a snowmobile excursion to an ice cave in the mountains
1	Travelling with whom	A family of four
2	Nationality	She is from the United States, and he is Dutch. The whole family lives in Brussels, Belgium
3	Age	The parents are in the mid-40s. The children are 12 and 15 years old
4	Profession	The father works at Deloitte, the consulting company
5	Month of the visit	March, 2019

6	Length of stay in Longyearbyen	One week
7	How did you know about Longyearbyen for the first time?	They said it was funny, because they discovered Svalbard by accident. On a rainy night, they were playing to guess capital cities of the world with a globe they have at their kitchen, and all of a sudden, the youngest of their children just pointed on Svalbard, but none of them thought that there could be people living up there. So, they searched on the Internet, and they discovered the town of Longyearbyen
8	How did you imagine Longyearbyen before knowing about this place?	They imagined a place full of ice and stormy waters
9	What has attracted you the most to come to visit Longyearbyen?	The possibility to be so Far North in the Arctic, and being able to see the Northern Lights, and explore the nature by snowmobile
10	What was the main aim of this trip in relation to yourself?	To connect themselves with the nature by enjoying adventurous activities. They said that their children are grown up enough to enjoy this kind of activities, and that this experience will broaden their minds
11	Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip?	The parents don't use Social Media, but the two children do, especially Instagram, and during the trip, they started following some hashtags related to polar bears
12	Did your perception of Longyearbyen change after seeing pictures or videos posted on Social Media?	Yes, because his son didn't know that animals could live so up north
13	Did you have any fears and worries before coming here?	The bad weather. Their fear was to have the excursions paid and then cancelled due to bad weather
14	What kind of activities are you doing here?	They booked this snowmobile tour to the ice cave in the mountains, but at the end, they couldn't participate since both parents forgot the driving license, which is mandatory to have in order to drive any snowmobile. Therefore, they were planning to join a boat excursion to Pyramiden (an abandoned Russian town), but the company could not guarantee if they could get off

		the boat once they arrive at the destination, since it depends on how much ice there is at the dock. The first day they did a night tour to chase the Northern Lights, but they were not lucky to see them
15	Would you consider Longyearbyen the highlight of your trip?	Yes, since they just made a stopover in Oslo, in order to arrive to Longyearbyen
16	Does your trip include any other destination?	No, they just stayed a couple of hours at the airport in Oslo
17	Why did you choose February to come to visit Longyearbyen?	They wanted to experience the Arctic winter, just as polar bears do (adds the youngest son), and to enjoy winter activities. They said ‘the real Arctic is for experiencing the real winter’, as it doesn’t make much sense for them to go to High North place in a season that is not representative of the place

Source: own illustration

Table 34: Face-to-face interview to tourist #T27 – Transcripts from notes

	Questions	Answers
0	Place	At Fruene Café (a café in the pedestrian street)
1	Travelling with whom	As a couple
2	Nationality	From Alaska, living in Fairbanks
3	Age	In their late 20s
4	Profession	Didn’t say
5	Month of the visit	March, 2019
6	Length of stay in Longyearbyen	Four days
7	How did you know about Longyearbyen for the first time?	The man has already studied at the University Centre in Svalbard for one semester in 2015 due to an exchange programme
8	How did you imagine Longyearbyen before knowing about this place?	(This question was omitted since this destination was already known)

9	What has attracted you the most to come to visit Longyearbyen?	The man wanted to show his girl the place where he was living for 6 months and which he fell in love with. At the same time, they wanted to be in a place where they could do a bit of cross-country skiing
10	What was the main aim of this trip in relation to yourself?	To remember those good times back in 2015, and being able to transmit that excitement and happiness to his girlfriend (the man replies)
11	Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip?	No, they said that Social Media had nothing to do with this trip
12	Did you have any fears and worries before coming here?	Not really, since the man has already been here, and he felt really confident
13	What kind of activities are you doing here?	They did a tour to the East coast by snowmobile, and they are planning to do some cross-country skiing
14	Would you consider Longyearbyen the highlight of your trip?	Definitely, since the aim of the trip was to stop feeling nostalgic of this place and make new memories of this new trip
15	Does your trip include any other destination?	No, they made several stop overs in order to arrive to Longyearbyen
16	Why did you choose February to come to visit Longyearbyen?	Because he remembered that February was the best month, since it is the end of the Polar Nights, and the twilight gives a special pink colour to the sky

Source: own illustration

Table 35: Face-to-face interview to tourist #T28 – Transcripts from notes

	Questions	Answers
0	Place	At Svalbardbutikken (the only supermarket in town)
1	Travelling with whom	A woman that was travelling with other 15 workmates (a Familiarization Trip, called 'FAM trip')
2	Nationality	From Sardinia, living in Cagliari
3	Age	In her mid-50s
4	Profession	Works at a travel agency
5	Month of the visit	March, 2019

6	Length of stay in Longyearbyen	Four days
7	How did you know about Longyearbyen for the first time?	Since she was young, she started working at a travel agency. She always had a special interest in the Arctic, cold and remote places, so she knew this place since long time ago
8	How did you imagine Longyearbyen before knowing about this place?	In this case, she didn't imagine much, since she already had the images of Lapland, where she has already been, so she kind of imagine the same
9	What has attracted you the most to come to visit Longyearbyen?	The chance of knowing this place she has dreamt of for a long time with all her workmates (of the same travel agency, but that were coming from different parts of Italy, such as Rome, Florence and Venice), and the chance to see again the Northern Lights, and to explore this destination, in order to promote it in the near future
10	What was the main aim of this trip in relation to yourself?	To remember the first trip to Rovaniemi, in Lapland when she was pregnant, and she saw the Northern Lights for the first time. She got so amazed by this phenomenon that when her daughter was born, she called her 'Aurora' (because of the 'Aurora Borealis', meaning, the Northern Lights)
11	Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip?	Not for this trip. She does use Social Media, both Facebook and Instagram but for personal reasons. She is now becoming more interested in using those platforms for tourism inspirations purposes
12	Did you have any fears and worries before coming here?	Not at all. Since she has already been to Lapland, she knew how to deal with the cold, and due to the fact that she was travelling in a group, she felt 'protected' by others
13	What kind of activities are you doing here?	They visited already the Svalbard Museum and they took a half-day dog sledding excursion to an ice cave in the mountains. They are planning to have an Arctic dinner at the trapper's station (where a big dog yard is, where the huskies live). She is hoping to be lucky and see the Northern Lights one night.
14	Would you consider Longyearbyen the highlight of your trip?	Yes, this whole trip was organized to be familiarized with the High Arctic
15	Does your trip include any other destination?	No, each one just did the connecting flights they need to in order to arrive to Longyearbyen

16	Why did you choose February to come to visit Longyearbyen?	February was the month chosen because it is the end of the dark season, Northern Lights can still be spotted, and the sun doesn't rise over the horizon, so that gives some special colours to the sky.
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Source: own illustration

Appendix 5: In-depth Instagram users' interviews

Table 36: Interview made on Instagram by private message to Tourist #T29

Question	Answer
Gender	Female
Nationality	From Germany
Travelling with whom	As a couple
Month of the visit	March, 2019
“I’m doing a research for my Master thesis, and I’m asking tourists their motivation to come to visit Longyearbyen. May I ask yours? And how did you know this place? How long will you stay? And what is your expectation about Svalbard? Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip, and did it change your perception of this destination? Many thanks”	“I actually saw a picture of a polar bear from Svalbard on Instagram and immediately said that I had to go there. I kind of thought, maybe I can never see such nature again due to climate change and global warming. So, I started researching and decided to combine a trip to Norway with a stay in Longyearbyen. I’m going with my boyfriend and we’ll be staying 5 days. I’m hoping for lots of snow, amazing tours, nice people and maybe also to see some wildlife as that is what I’m most interested in. Yes, definitely, I was influenced by that picture on Instagram, and it changed my perception of the North Pole when I saw that its flora and fauna was so rich”

Source: own illustration

Table 37: Interview made on Instagram by private message to Tourist #T30

Question	Answer
Gender	Female
Nationality	From Ireland
Travelling with whom	Solo traveller
Month of the visit	January, 2019
“Hello! I saw your post on Instagram about your trip to Longyearbyen. I’m doing a research for my Master thesis about the motivations of tourists to travel to Longyearbyen. May I ask where you are from, how many days you stayed there, your motivations to visit Longyearbyen, how did you know the place, and why did you choose January to visit Svalbard? Did you just visit Svalbard, or was it part of a trip around Europe? Did Social Media make any influence on	“I was there for an academic conference. The conference was on the theme of "Darkness", and so it was held in Svalbard at a time of year when it would be constantly dark! I was just in Svalbard for 5 days. I'm from

the decision of this trip, and did it change your perception of this destination? Many thanks for your time. This information would help me a lot, Carolina”	Ireland. No, Social Media didn’t have anything to do with this trip”
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Source: own illustration

Table 38: Interview made on Instagram by private message to Tourist #T31

Question	Answer
Gender	Male
Nationality	From Argentina
Travelling with whom	As a couple
Month of the visit	January, 2019
“I’m doing a research for my Master thesis, and I’m asking tourists their motivation to come to visit Longyearbyen. May I ask yours? And how did you know this place? How long will you stay? And what is your expectation about Svalbard? Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip, and did it change your perception of this destination? Many thanks”	“My initial idea was to go to Tromsø. My girlfriend is Norwegian, and she once told me that Tromsø was the best place to see the Northern Lights. But one day, by checking on the Internet, I discovered Svalbard, and after reading about that place, I just got amazed, and I wanted to go there. I had 2 motivations: 1. To be in the northernmost town in the world, since we have the southernmost one in Argentina (which is Ushuaia). 2. To see the Northern Lights from home. I went in January because I planned my holidays on that month, without knowing that later I would live in Oslo with my girlfriend. In my case, Social Media didn’t help me”

Source: own illustration

Table 39: Interview made on Instagram by private message to Tourist #T32

Question	Answer
Gender	Male
Nationality	From Turkey
Travelling with whom	Solo traveller
Month of the visit	January, 2019
“Hello! I saw your post on Instagram about your trip to Longyearbyen. I’m doing a research	“First of all, Svalbard is a lovely place. I am from Istanbul, Turkey and I’m working in a corporate company Citibank. I’m also a climber and a

for my Master thesis about the motivations of tourists to travel to Longyearbyen. May I ask where you are from, how many days you stayed there, your motivations to visit Longyearbyen, how did you know the place, and why did you choose January to visit Svalbard? Did you just visit Svalbard, or was it part of a trip around Europe? Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip, and did it change your perception of this destination? Many thanks for your time. This information would help me a lot, Carolina”	traveller. So, I finished almost all Europe. I first visited Tromsø, Norway, and I fell in love with the Arctic, the colours, animals, people, everything. So, I visited Tromsø for the second time, then Kirkenes, Iceland, and there I have heard about Svalbard, so I started to investigate. As a climber, I like the adventure. And I’m also an Arctic lover. Svalbard is the last settlement point before the North Pole and many polar bears are there. It was definitely a place to discover. And I came there, stayed 4 nights, and visited all the Russian mine settlements with a daily boat tour. And yes, I saw a polar bear, and it was an amazing experience. Ps.: it was not a part of any other travel. I came there specifically, and I didn’t check through Social Media to come here”
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Source: own illustration

Table 40: Interview made on Instagram by private message to Tourist #T33

Question	Answer
Gender	Male
Nationality	From Turkey
Travelling with whom	Solo traveller
Month of the visit	January, 2019
“Hello! I saw your post on Instagram about your trip to Longyearbyen. I’m doing a research for my Master thesis about the motivations of tourists to travel to Longyearbyen. May I ask where you are from, how many days you stayed there, your motivations to visit Longyearbyen, how did you know the place, and why did you choose January to visit Svalbard? Did you just visit Svalbard, or was it part of a	“I stayed in Svalbard for 4 days, arrived Friday and left Monday. I decided to visit Longyearbyen in January as I wanted to experience the Polar Nights and try to see the Northern Lights. I didn’t know about this place before. How I found it, it was pretty interesting. I was at home one day and I said that I wanted to see the Northern Lights, so I should go somewhere in Norway or Finland, but as Far North as possible. I was looking at the world map while looking at places like Tromsø, Senja, Lapland, etc., even Greenland as well, but then I saw Svalbard. I did some research on Svalbard, and then I found a lot of interesting information about that place. For example: that it is the northernmost civilization on Earth, near to the North Pole, and that there are a lot of activities to do, which I love. Then, I just decided to go there. I didn’t get

trip around Europe? Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip, and did it change your perception of this destination? Many thanks for your time. This information would help me a lot, Carolina”	to see the Northern Lights, but it was still such an amazing and incredible adventure and time!. If I could live there, I would. It is a very lovely and quite place, not busy and noisy like other big cities, just calm and peaceful and it has nature all around. I have Instagram and Facebook but I just use it to post some pictures of my trip. I am Turkish, but I live in London, England”
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Source: own illustration

Table 41: Interview made on Instagram by private message to Tourist #T34

Question	Answer
Gender	Male
Nationality	From Norway
Travelling with whom	Solo traveller
Month of the visit	January, 2019
“Hello! I saw your post on Instagram about your trip to Longyearbyen. I’m doing a research for my Master thesis about the motivations of tourists to travel to Longyearbyen. May I ask where you are from, how many days you stayed there, your motivations to visit Longyearbyen, how did you know the place, and why did you choose January to visit Svalbard? Did you just visit Svalbard, or was it part of a trip around Europe? Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip, and did it change your perception of this destination? Many thanks for your time. This information would help me a lot, Carolina”	“Hi. I’m from Bergen. The rainy city. I lived in Svalbard from December to March. I just heard they needed floor layers up in Svalbard. So, I packed my bag and moved up. And loved the place. I’m definitely going back to work more there. I wasn’t a regular tourist. Tax is really low up there. A lot of people travel up there for work. No Social Media influence in my case”

Source: own illustration

Table 42: Interview made on Instagram by private message to Tourist #T35

Question	Answer
Gender	Male
Nationality	From Norway
Travelling with whom	Solo traveller

Month of the visit	January, 2019
“Hello! I saw your post on Instagram about your trip to Longyearbyen. I’m doing a research for my Master thesis about the motivations of tourists to travel to Longyearbyen. May I ask where you are from, how many days you stayed there, your motivations to visit Longyearbyen, how did you know the place, and why did you choose January to visit Svalbard? Did you just visit Svalbard, or was it part of a trip around Europe? Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip, and did it change your perception of this destination? Many thanks for your time. This information would help me a lot, Carolina”	“Hi. I’m from Ålesund, Norway. I stayed there 3 nights. My motivation: to explore the Arctic and do something “different”. It was just a trip to Svalbard. Why January? I don’t know. I should have done a little bit more research. Next time I go there, I will choose March/ April. Talking about Social Media, I haven’t seen pictures before”

Source: own illustration

Table 43: Interview made on Instagram by private message to Tourist #T36

Question	Answer
Gender	Male
Nationality	From the United Kingdom
Travelling with whom	Solo traveller
Month of the visit	January, 2019
“Hello! I saw your post on Instagram about your trip to Longyearbyen. I’m doing a research for my Master thesis about the motivations of tourists to travel to Longyearbyen. May I ask where you are from, how many days you stayed there, your motivations to visit Longyearbyen, how did you know the place, and why did you choose January to visit Svalbard? Did you just visit Svalbard, or was it part of a trip around Europe? Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip, and did it change your perception of this destination? Many thanks for your time. This information would help me a lot, Carolina”	“I’m from Leicester, in the UK. I stayed in Longyearbyen for 5 days. I arrived on Monday and departed on Friday. This was after 2 days in Oslo so my total trip away from the UK was 7 days. I wanted to visit after I saw a friend’s picture of their visit on Instagram, so I wanted to catch the Northern Lights which I did on 4 of the days. Before seeing that picture, I didn’t know that the North Pole was so attractive. I also wanted to do dog sledding, snowmobile driving, hiking in the snow and caves and just to experience something extremely different to what I have experienced before. January was chosen as I wanted to experience the polar night with the complete darkness, and also because I managed to get some slightly cheaper flights”

Source: own illustration

Table 44: Interview made on Instagram by private message to Tourist #T37

Question	Answer
Gender	Female
Nationality	From Norway
Travelling with whom	Solo traveller
Month of the visit	February, 2019
“Hello! I saw your post on Instagram about your trip to Longyearbyen. I’m doing a research for my Master thesis about the motivations of tourists to travel to Longyearbyen. May I ask where you are from, how many days you stayed there, your motivations to visit Longyearbyen, how did you know the place, and why did you choose January to visit Svalbard? Did you just visit Svalbard, or was it part of a trip around Europe? Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip, and did it change your perception of this destination? Many thanks for your time. This information would help me a lot, Carolina”	“I’m from Norway. I stayed there for 5 days in February and it was my third visit there within the past 2 years. I went there to visit friends and enjoy the nature / go snowmobiling, and I don’t check often Social Media platforms. I randomly post pictures on Instagram”.

Source: own illustration

Table 45: Interview made on Instagram by private message to Tourist #T38

Question	Answer
Gender	Male
Nationality	From Ireland, living in Cork
Travelling with whom	As a couple
Month of the visit	February, 2019
“Hello! I saw your post on Instagram about your trip to Longyearbyen. I’m doing a research for my Master thesis about the motivations of tourists to travel to Longyearbyen. May I ask where you are from, how many days you stayed there, your motivations to visit Longyearbyen, how did you know the place, and why did you choose January to visit Svalbard? Did you just visit Svalbard, or was it part of a trip around Europe? Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip, and did it change your perception of this destination? Many thanks for your time. This information would help me a lot, Carolina”	“We stayed in Longyearbyen for 3 days as part of a 10-day trip to Tromsø. We went in February for the long nights, hoping to see the Northern Lights but also because there were a few hours during the day in Svalbard where it was bright! Also, Longyearbyen is the northernmost town to visit by plane so it was on my bucket list to get as close to the North Pole as economically as possible!. No Social Media influenced us”

Source: own illustration

Table 46: Interview made on Instagram by private message to Tourist #T39

Question	Answer
Gender	Male
Nationality	From the Netherlands
Travelling with whom	Solo traveller
Month of the visit	February, 2019
“Hello! I saw your post on Instagram about your trip to Longyearbyen. I’m doing a research for my Master thesis about the motivations of tourists to travel to Longyearbyen. May I ask where you are from, how many days you stayed there, your motivations to visit Longyearbyen, how did you know the place, and why did you choose January to visit Svalbard? Did you just visit Svalbard, or was it part of a trip around Europe? Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip, and did it change your perception of this destination? Many thanks for your time. This information would help me a lot, Carolina”	“This year I am in Longyearbyen for the 2nd time. April 2018 I was a guest for 4 days and this year, the first week of March, I was 7 days in Longyearbyen. My first interest in a trip was awakened by a book I read. This was a thriller that dealt with the plane crash that took place in the 90s. Since my visit last year, I have been thinking of this magical place every day. Really every day I have seen photos, videos and other posts. On Instagram, I only started following some hashtags after knowing about Longyearbyen. The impression that this beautiful serene environment had made on me is unprecedented. Last year I tried to reach Pyramiden by boat. Unfortunately, there was 12 km of ice in Billefjorden at that time, so we couldn't get there. That's why I came to Svalbard a month earlier this year. I wanted to reach Pyramiden by snowmobile, and I succeeded. Next year I want to go to Svalbard with my 2 sons to let them feel this wonderful and respectful environment. Ever since I have been in the High Arctic, I feel the need to go back there. Just to clean up my head and fill up my heart. I am a goldsmith and love to walk around with my photo camera”.

Source: own illustration

Table 47: Interview made on Instagram by private message to Tourist #T40

Question	Answer
Gender	Male
Nationality	From Denmark
Travelling with whom	With friends
Month of the visit	February, 2019

<p>“Hello! I saw your post on Instagram about your trip to Longyearbyen. I’m doing a research for my Master thesis about the motivations of tourists to travel to Longyearbyen. May I ask where you are from, how many days you stayed there, your motivations to visit Longyearbyen, how did you know the place, and why did you choose January to visit Svalbard? Did you just visit Svalbard, or was it part of a trip around Europe? Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip, and did it change your perception of this destination? Many thanks for your time. This information would help me a lot, Carolina”</p>	<p>“My reason was just doing tourism. I love to travel and lately to places that still keep the appearance of old days. To hear stories of people and to see the untouched nature. We are 5 friends that live in Denmark, and we all wanted to explore the nature and see polar bear. This place is just awesome, not boring, unique and stands out. It is like an undiscovered world. There is so much danger in Longyearbyen, that even when you die you are not allowed to die. I have Instagram but I haven’t seen pictures before coming here”</p>
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Source: own illustration

Table 48: Interview made on Instagram by private message to Tourist #T41

Question	Answer
Gender	Female
Nationality	From Italy, living in Trieste
Travelling with whom	As a couple
Month of the visit	February, 2019
<p>“Hello! I saw your post on Instagram about your trip to Longyearbyen. I’m doing a research for my Master thesis about the motivations of tourists to travel to Longyearbyen. May I ask where you are from, how many days you stayed there, your motivations to visit Longyearbyen, how did you know the place, and why did you choose January to visit Svalbard? Did you just visit Svalbard, or was it part of a trip around Europe? Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip, and did it change your perception of this destination? Many thanks for your time. This information would help me a lot, Carolina”</p>	<p>“I’m Italian, from Trieste. My boyfriend and I love nature and adventure travel, with hiking and outdoor activities. We have seen photos of Svalbard on Instagram and we fell in love with this heavenly place! We stayed there 8 days in February, because we have read on Internet that the colours that are in this month are the most beautiful and also to see the Aurora! Every day we went on a different excursion, it was wonderful. We only visited Svalbard on this trip. Last year we took a trip along the coast of the Norwegian mainland, from Oslo to North Cape, but Social Media was not an influence. I post sometimes pictures when I see incredible places like for example, Svalbard”.</p>

Source: own illustration

Table 49: Interview made on Instagram by private message to Tourist #T42

Question	Answer
Gender	Male
Nationality	From the United States, living in New York
Travelling with whom	Solo traveller
Month of the visit	February, 2019
“Hello! I saw your post on Instagram about your trip to Longyearbyen. I’m doing a research for my Master thesis about the motivations of tourists to travel to Longyearbyen. May I ask where you are from, how many days you stayed there, your motivations to visit Longyearbyen, how did you know the place, and why did you choose January to visit Svalbard? Did you just visit Svalbard, or was it part of a trip around Europe? Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip, and did it change your perception of this destination? Many thanks for your time. This information would help me a lot, Carolina”	“I stayed at Funken lodge. I chose Longyearbyen as I have travelled Far North into arctic circle, but I wanted to see last piece of land in High Arctic. I took the trip only to see Svalbard, I only wish I stayed longer. February is a month where sun starts to rise allowing you to see the landscape a little. The High Arctic offers a unique beauty when seen in winter. It was the wildest place I have seen so far. Starry clear skies, Northern Lights lighting up the sky. Yes, I have seen some pictures on Facebook once, but it did not influence me, but somehow I saw the High Arctic as a potential place to visit”.

Source: own illustration

Table 50: Interview made on Instagram by private message to Tourist #T43

Question	Answer
Gender	Male
Nationality	From Sweden
Travelling with whom	Solo traveller
Month of the visit	February, 2019
“Hello! I’m writing my Master thesis in Tourism about motivations of tourists that are visiting Longyearbyen. That’s why for my research, I’m asking tourists why they chose Longyearbyen, the Arctic during winter time. What was the reason why you decided to go there? Did Social Media make	“I chose Longyearbyen not because of Social Media, but because it's kind of exotic, not a typical place to go on vacation and I like to see odd places, see what everyone else doesn't, and on the contrary, I try to avoid typical tourist traps and destinations. And the Arctic winter is real winter for me,

any influence on the decision of this trip, and did it change your perception of this destination? Many thanks for your help, Carolina”	not like shitty Swedish winter. The landscape is magically beautiful, worth the cold, and there are really cool animals”
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Source: own illustration

Table 51: Interview made on Instagram by private message to Tourist #T44

Question	Answer
Gender	Male
Nationality	From Ukraine
Travelling with whom	Solo traveller
Month of the visit	February, 2019
“Hello! I’m writing my Master thesis in Tourism about motivations of tourists that are visiting Longyearbyen. That’s why for my research, I’m asking tourists why they chose Longyearbyen, the Arctic during winter time. What was the reason why you decided to go there? Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip, and did it change your perception of this destination? Many thanks for your help, Carolina”	“The main reason I’ve been there it’s because during this time, there is no sun, it’s really cold, and I really love this atmosphere. I like to see through Instagram pictures from professional photographers”

Source: own illustration

Table 52: Interview made on Instagram by private message to Tourist #T45

Question	Answer
Gender	Female
Nationality	From Norway
Travelling with whom	Solo traveller
Month of the visit	February, 2019
“Hello! I’m writing my Master thesis in Tourism about motivations of tourists that are visiting Longyearbyen. That’s why for my research, I’m asking tourists why they chose	“I think Svalbard is unique. Nature is beautiful and special with glaciers and ice caves, white clad mountain and no trees. The light is great, with the Northern Lights in the dark season, and the pink light in February when the sun shines on the mountain tops, and the long, bright days this time of year. I like to take picture, and some of them I post them on Instagram, and there are lots of nice and special

Longyearbyen, the Arctic during winter time. What was the reason why you decided to go there? Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip, and did it change your perception of this destination? Many thanks for your help, Carolina”	motifs. They take good care of their history, so I almost felt that I was travelling back in time. I used to say that Svalbard cannot be explained, it must be experienced! In addition to all the amazing beauty, it is also a little bit exciting because of the polar bears. The people in Svalbard are very friendly and helpful. And I would also like to say that the food in the restaurants is fantastic, the best menus and skilled chefs from around the world. I've been there twice now, and I will be back for sure. I'm from Trondheim in Norway”.
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Source: own illustration

Table 53: Interview made on Instagram by private message to Tourist #T46

Question	Answer
Gender	Male
Nationality	From Italy
Travelling with whom	Solo traveller
Month of the visit	February, 2019
“Hello! I’m writing my Master thesis in Tourism about motivations of tourists that are visiting Longyearbyen. That’s why for my research, I’m asking tourists why they chose Longyearbyen, the Arctic during winter time. What was the reason why you decided to go there? Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip, and did it change your perception of this destination? Many thanks for your help, Carolina”	“I chose Longyearbyen because I fell in love with Northern countries a few years ago and wanted to visit one of the northernmost places on earth, where nature is boundless and somehow dictates men's lifestyle. I also love photography and blue hour, which makes Longyearbyen the perfect place for me to be in February. Social Media did nothing to do with my decision”.

Source: own illustration

Table 54: Interview made on Instagram by private message to Tourist #T47

Question	Answer
Gender	Female
Nationality	From Thailand
Travelling with whom	As a couple

Month of the visit	March, 2019
“Hello! I’m writing my Master thesis in Tourism about motivations of tourists that are visiting Longyearbyen. That’s why for my research, I’m asking tourists why they chose Longyearbyen, the Arctic during winter time. What was the reason why you decided to go there? Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip, and did it change your perception of this destination? Many thanks for your help, Carolina”	<p>“The reason why my boyfriend and I chose to go to Longyearbyen was because we’ve read about the many interesting things about the place. Here are some of the things we were interested in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the island being furthest city to the north and closest to the north pole (which we thought was cool), - the island having more polar bear population than humans (I really hoped to see one but didn’t), - the seed vault was an interesting place that we wanted to visit, - the scenery of snow covers mountains and town <p>My boyfriend is a photographer and he likes to take photos of landscapes. He has seen some pictures on Instagram and Facebook, and showed them to me. I got amazed how beautiful the North Pole was”.</p>

Source: own illustration

Table 55: Interview made on Instagram by private message to Tourist #T48

Question	Answer
Gender	Female
Nationality	From Norway
Travelling with whom	As a couple
Month of the visit	March, 2019
“Hello! I’m writing my Master thesis in Tourism about motivations of tourists that are visiting Longyearbyen. That’s why for my research, I’m asking tourists why they chose Longyearbyen, the Arctic during winter time. What was the reason why you decided to go there? Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip, and did it change your perception of this destination? Many thanks for your help, Carolina”	“I’m from south Norway. We went from Friday to Monday, and our main motivation was to explore the Arctic and one of the most beautiful places. February has the best light and we wanted to see it. I post pictures on Instagram of overwhelming landscapes such as Svalbard”.

Source: own illustration

Table 56: Interview made on Instagram by private message to Tourist #T49

Question	Answer
Gender	Female
Nationality	From China
Travelling with whom	With her family
Month of the visit	March, 2019
“Hello! I’m writing my Master thesis in Tourism about motivations of tourists that are visiting Longyearbyen. That’s why for my research, I’m asking tourists why they chose Longyearbyen, the Arctic during winter time. What was the reason why you decided to go there? Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip, and did it change your perception of this destination? Many thanks for your help, Carolina”	“Firstly, I was in Norway as my sister and her family were living in Sandefjord and so I was visiting them with my mom, as it was Chinese New Year period and that’s when we were having a long break from work (like Europe’s summer holiday). My brother in law who is a Norwegian chose the location as he was able to get cheap tickets for the whole family there. Although we had our concerns especially the cold weather as my mom is getting old and the children are still young, but anyways, we decided to go over the weekend. We were supposed to have 2 days/2 nights there but our flight was delayed for 12 hours thus we missed out on 1 day and left with 1 day there. We didn’t do much during the trip, just walking along the city street, and we had a 2-hour tour with a very good guide. We missed the Northern Lights which was such a pity and did not do the dog sledding which I really wanted to experience. The city is breathtaking, and I really mean it, as I’m very well-travelled and nothing could take my breath away like Longyearbyen, talking about it again makes me miss the place a lot. I’m addicted to Instagram but this time it did not influence me”.

Source: own illustration

Table 57: Interview made on Instagram by private message to Tourist #T50

Question	Answer
Gender	Male
Nationality	Norway
Travelling with whom	Solo traveller
Month of the visit	March, 2019
“Hello! I’m writing my Master thesis in Tourism about motivations of tourists that are visiting	“I’ve wanted to visit Longyearbyen for some time, and decided to go during winter time because: 1. Polar night. Wanted to experience how it was to have "night all day". Unfortunately, the polar night was over

<p>Longyearbyen. That's why for my research, I'm asking tourists why they chose Longyearbyen. What was the reason why you decided to go there? Did Social Media make any influence on the decision of this trip, and did it change your perception of this destination? Many thanks for your help, Carolina"</p>	<p>when we got there, but we got to experience the "blue hour" and also saw the sky turn pink, which we also researched beforehand and though would be very cool to experience, and it was!</p> <p>2. Northern Lights. We were lucky to see a little bit the first night.</p> <p>3. It seems so remote and special place to live, so I wanted to experience how life was up there"</p> <p>I'm from Norway, so I knew this place since I was a child, so Social Media didn't make me discover this place"</p>
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Source: own illustration