“Green Consumers”
How students as consumers take environmental issues into consideration as they buy and look for products?
A comparison between Belgium and Sweden
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Abstract

Although green marketing and “green” consumption behaviour are topical issues in the field of marketing, these issues still need to be explored, analyzed and understood by marketers and researchers. This was the main motivation for writing the thesis. The purpose is to identify how students, in Belgium and in Sweden, respond to green marketing practices and “green” products. A further aim is to explore how they take environmental issues into consideration as they buy and look for products. Furthermore, the idea of a comparison of the two countries also comes to mind. The existing literature helps to clarify the theoretical background. A quantitative study, through a same and unique online survey designed for both countries, was conducted in order to gather appropriated data. A sample of 587 students was collected. Thereby, the point of views of these students about the green issues relating to the value-action gap, trust and scrutiny in companies’ claims, price sensitiveness and finally the gender difference of the consumer, are analyzed. The findings point out that consumers confirmed this value-action gap, were in general confident in the green claims, showed a different price sensitiveness and reasserted the fact that green consumers tend to be rather female than male. Moreover, the situation is quite similar in both countries. The implications of green marketing and its related issues are from great relevance for companies in order to sustain on the market in the future. The companies and marketers should focus on students, which represent a young emerging part of our society.
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1 Introduction

1.1 Background of the scientific problem

Over the past years, the general concern in society about ecological or green issues has really increased; this concern leads to the fact that the green consumer movement is becoming large and is constantly growing. According to Aili Jokela, Fleishmann-Hillard’s sustainability co-chair, “green will become as pervasive as the Internet is today; it will become part of the way we live, the way we do business and how we function as a society”\(^1\). In this society, consumers’ behaviour, or more precisely the green consumers’ behaviour will play a central role. A role that today’s companies have to assess in order to understand and satisfy customers’ needs and wants. Therefore, it is from great relevance to focus on these needs and wants in order to practice successful green marketing.

1.2 Formulation of the problem and research questions

In order to approach this topic of “green marketing”, and more precisely the “green consumers”, the following research questions will be examined:

How consumers, particularly students, in Belgium as well as in Sweden, take environmental issues into consideration as they buy and search for products? How are they acting in order to find out information? Do they trust in companies’ claims and green products? Who are these green consumers: more female or either male? Finally, are there similarities or differences when comparing both countries?

1.3 Delimitation of the problem

It is obvious that studying the “green” behaviour of all consumers within a country -without any delimitation- would be an unrealistic task to achieve within two months. As a matter of fact I will focus my attention on students, who constitute a potentially large group of consumers in favour of environmental protection and many other green issues. Therefore, they could represent a real opportunity for companies. Moreover, I will focus on Belgian as well as Swedish students and try to compare the situation in both countries.

\(^1\) Levy, P. (2009), p.12
1.4 **The purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study is to identify how students in two different countries, Belgium and in Sweden, respond to green marketing practices and “green” products, as well as how they take environmental issues into consideration as they buy and look for products.

Subsequently, this study has the purpose to assess and to compare the consumer behaviour of students in order to examine if the situation differs in the two countries. It could be really interesting to determine if the countries present rather similarities or differences in consumers’ attitudes and behaviours as well as to discover cultural influences.

Furthermore, the aim of this study is to find out if the students’ segment is a real opportunity for companies which implement green marketing.

1.5 **Layout**

After having introduced the theme as well as the purpose of the thesis, the author is going to deal with a chapter about the theoretical background. The theoretical part is composed of a small introduction to the green marketing concept and its evolution, before going on with the core of the thesis regarding the green consumer. There consumers’ characteristics, attitudes and behaviours as well as the increasing scrutiny will be evoked. To finish this theoretical chapter, the cultural differences and national cultures according to Hofstede will be explained.

The thesis will carry on with the research method for which the design, the description of data collection and the validity and reliability of the research will be discussed. After this, the author’s empirical research with the results will be presented and analyzed.

Last but not least, a discussion about the most important findings as well as its contribution to the research will take place, the conclusions of the thesis will be drawn up and recommendations will be made.
2 Theoretical background

2.1 Conventional marketing

Before going into the core topic of green marketing and the green consumer, the author is going to start with a brief introduction to the marketing concept, its definitions and the marketing process.

2.1.1 Definition of marketing

The term marketing changed and evolved over a period of time. Many different authors suggested definitions, but the “better” definitions are those that focus upon customer orientation as well as the satisfaction of customer needs and wants.

Kotler et al. give a broad definition of marketing, which states that marketing is: “the social process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating and exchanging products and value with others”. Hence, marketing is defined as “a process by which companies create value for customers and build strong customer relationships in order to capture value from customer in return”. There is a strong commitment to exchange relationships with customers.

Another well-accepted definition of marketing is that of The Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM), which says that: “marketing is the management process responsible for identifying, anticipating and satisfying customer requirements profitably”. This definition suggests not only looking at identifying customer needs, but also satisfying them (in a short-term vision) and anticipating them in the future (in a long-term retention).

2.1.2 The marketing process

Marketing of any form must be translated from a concept into action through the marketing process. You can have the best concept, but if you do not put the concept into action through a reliable marketing process, you will not succeed in marketing.

The marketing process covers a broad set of activities in a firm. Following Kotler et al. the marketing process can be described as: “the process of (1) analysing marketing opportunities; (2) selecting target markets; (3) developing the marketing mix; and (4)

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2 Kotler, P. et al. (2008), p. 6
3 Kotler, P. et al. (2008), p. 6
managing the marketing effort\textsuperscript{5}. The marketing process is supposed to involve the whole business in meeting customers’ needs, but in practice this is not always the case.

2.2 Green marketing

At first, I will make a brief review of the history and evolution of green marketing from a consumer viewpoint. Furthermore, I will explain green marketing and the idea behind green marketing. Then, the green marketing as a process will be explained as well as the different dimensions of green marketing.

2.2.1 History and evolution of the Green Marketing from a consumer viewpoint

The idea of “Green Marketing” is a global concept that emerged in the late 1980s when firms as well as consumers began to show concern about “Corporate Social Responsibility” (CSR). Marketing as a newly introduced concept was soon the subject of a great deal of market research and a lot of different aspects of green marketing were discussed academically\textsuperscript{6}.

In the early 1990s green marketing “had arrived in earnest”\textsuperscript{7}. This era was characterised with a heightened environmental awareness, a growing consumer interest in green products and a pronounced willingness to pay for green features\textsuperscript{8}. Surveys showed a really extensive green market potential. The future promised to be bright.

Despite all these hopeful forecasts, the mid 1990s were a period of backlash for green oriented companies and green marketers. Market growth for green and environmentally-friendly products had not evolved as expected. Firstly, because consumers had become disillusioned by “green washing” practices from many firms that claimed to be “green”. This conducted to consumer scepticism and cynicism about green claims and practices of many firms. Secondly, there was a significant gap between environmental concern and actual purchasing. Marketers realised that consumer concern for the environment and a concomitant desire for green products did not translate into purchasing behaviour\textsuperscript{9}.

The late 1990s and the change to the new millennium brought a revival to green marketing. Due to the implementation of more advanced technology, stricter state enforcement on deceptive claims, government regulations and incentives as well as closer

\textsuperscript{5} Kotler, P. et al. (2008), p. 41
\textsuperscript{7} Peattie, K. (1992), p. 46
\textsuperscript{8} Peattie, K. and Crane, A. (2005) p. 358
\textsuperscript{9} Kaman, L. (2008) p. 574
scrutiny from various environmental organisations and the media, many green products have greatly improved and regained consumer confidence\(^\text{10}\).

Nowadays, green marketing is no more a possibility, but a necessity. Consumers, firms, organizations and governments are strongly conscious of this fact. Marketers have to take environmental issues into consideration if they want to sustain on the market.

2.2.2 Definition and concept behind “Green Marketing”

Green marketing can -in the same way as marketing- be defined in various manners. Following Ken Peattie, who is one of the leading authors since the very beginning of green marketing in the 1990s, “green marketing is a style of marketing which has arisen in response to the increasing concern about the state of the global environment and the life it contains - including human life”\(^\text{11}\). Based on the definition of marketing of the Chartered Institute of Marketing, Peattie defined green marketing as: “the holistic management process responsible for identifying, anticipating and satisfying the requirements of customer and society, in a profitable and sustainable way”\(^\text{12}\).

Svend Hollensen too gives an interesting definition of green marketing. He states that “green marketing is integrating business practices and products that are friendly to the environment while also meeting the needs and wants of the customers”\(^\text{13}\). This definition insists, in the same order of ideas as Peattie’s one, on satisfying customers’ needs and wants. As a marketer, one should never loose off this fact. The product could be the greenest product of the market, but if it does not respond to consumers’ needs and wants, it could really lead to a commercial disaster.

The terminology of green marketing varies and one could easily find other terms like ecological marketing, eco-marketing, environmental and sustainable marketing. The overall aim of green marketing is and stays to include environmental issues into the marketing efforts\(^\text{14}\).

\(^{10}\) Kaman, L. (2008) p. 575

\(^{11}\) Peattie, K. (1992), p. 11


\(^{13}\) Hollensen, S. (2007), p. 460

2.2.3 Green marketing process model

Now, the author will just briefly evoke a green marketing process model from Ken Peattie (an adapted model is summarised in the appendices, see figure 1). Even if this model is quite old, it has stayed relevant over the past years and is still topical nowadays. Furthermore, the proposed model takes into consideration controllable internal variables as well as external variables, demands of the environment; last ones include the paying customers and consumers. Both, internal as well as external variables, contribute in a practical way to the understanding of the green marketing process. In fact, the successful marketing process essentially attempts to match the controllable internal variables of the marketing mix with the demands of the environment in which the company operates

This model shows which role the paying customers and consumers, who are part of the external variables, play in the green marketing process. Furthermore, the model helps to understand the importance of consumers.

It is relevant to identify who they are at first? Then to have a look at how “green” they are in fact and how well they are informed about green issues? In the same way it is from great significance to identify what are their wants and needs.

2.2.4 The Success factors of green marketing following green consumers

In order to succeed in green marketing and to convince consumers, you have to ensure that the internal as well as the external green variables meet the following four success criteria

Satisfaction of stakeholders needs: The aim is to succeed in implementing green issues while satisfying customer needs and wants. But it does not limit to consumers; other stakeholders, for example environmental organizations or governments or even employees, also want to be satisfied. Marketers have to take all potential stakeholders into consideration by ensuring satisfaction.

Safety of products and processes: Products, services, production or other processes in the marketing value chain have to meet strong safety and environmental standards for consumers, workers, society and the whole environment.

Social acceptability of the company: Products, services, processes and the whole company itself have to give a clear message about its practices in terms of green marketing.

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15 Peattie, K. (1992), p. 103
Not to mention the increasing scepticism and scrutiny shown by consumer behaviour concerning green marketing. Marketers have to convince consumers of the greenness of their products and practices.

**Sustainability** of its activities: Products, services as well as all activities of the company have to stay sustainable in consumer eyes. You have to integrate a long-term vision in the marketing process in order to stay sustainable but also competitive in the market.

All four success factors include a consumer perspective, which means that you should never forget the role of the consumer as an essential stakeholder of green marketing.

### 2.3 “Green” consumer

Consumers play “the” central role in marketing, but they are often forgotten and this is one of the reasons for the failure of many products or services. As a marketer you mainly have to focus on and to satisfy consumers’ needs and wants.

Following Ken Peattie: “The green consumer is the driving force behind the green marketing process”\(^{17}\). Thus, for marketers it is necessary to understand what it means to be a green consumer! Furthermore, it is from great significance to understand (green) consumers’ attitudes, beliefs and behaviours.

#### 2.3.1 Characteristics of the green consumer

In order to characterize the green consumer, it is probably useful at first do define green consumption. This must involve “*consuming in a more sustainable and social way*”; the green consumer could be defined as “*the one whose purchasing and non-purchasing decisions are based at least partly on environmental or social criteria*”\(^{18}\).

Numerous studies\(^{19}\) were made in order to define characteristics of the green consumers. Some of these studies also tried to divide the green market into market segments based on the “greenness” of the consumer\(^{20}\).

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\(^{17}\) Peattie, K. (1992), p. 114


The best-known segmentation of consumers’ environmental attitudes, and probably most adopted from many authors, was developed in the USA by Roper Starch Worldwide. They identified five segments of consumers each with varying degrees of concern and action\textsuperscript{21}:

**Consumer Typology by US Roper Starch Worldwide**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Segment</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| True Blue Greens | Actual behaviour is consistent with very strong concerns about the environment.  
-> Major green purchasers and recyclers. |
| Greenback Greens | Commitment to the environment is mainly manifested by willingness to pay substantially higher prices for green products.  
-> Will buy or give green, won’t make lifestyle changes. |
| Sprouts          | Show middling levels of concern about the environment and equally middling levels of behavioural response.  
-> Care but would only spend a little more to buy green. |
| Grousers         | Consistently rationalize the lack of pro environmental behaviour by offering all kinds of excuses and criticizing the poor performance of others.  
-> See the environment as a problem, but somebody else’s. |
| Basic Browns     | Do not believe individuals can make a difference in solving environmental problems, and do not want to make a difference.  
-> Essentially don’t care / won’t care. |

\textit{Table 2.1}


This segmentation of consumers’ environmental attitudes has already been used in several scientific works and studies. Coming from the USA, it could be argued if it will be appropriate for surveys or studies in Europe, but the author thinks that the fact that the world is becoming more and more global gives to this model even in Europe all its pertinence.

This model, which was mainly used in the past, is not to be accepted without a bit of criticism. Indeed, this typology is mixing behaviour characteristics, but also attitudes. If you consider the consumer typology of the “True Blue Greens” and the “Sprouts” (see Table 2.1); the first ones are described in regard to their actual behaviour, the second ones are

described in regard to their environmental concern. This is arguable since you can not mix behaviour and attitudes in a same way in order to draw up consumer typologies.

All different studies, including the one presented by Roper Starch Worldwide, based on several consumer typologies could not find a global/common approval in the green marketing world. One will not find one universal green market segmented model, but a lot of them, which are all arguable.

Results from surveys made about typical demographic characteristics pointed out that females, young people and people with a relatively high education and income were identified as most likely to engage in green consumer behaviour. This is confirmed by Jacquelyn Ottman, president and founder of J. Ottman Consulting as well as author of several articles and books about green marketing, who states that: “The green consumers tend to be educated, upscale and college-educated. They tend to be more female than male”. Furthermore, past studies found that young people are more ready than older generations to accept new and innovative ideas; and that supporters of environmental protection tend to be younger in age.

Other surveys concerning more psychographic qualities such as political orientation and environmental concerns were conducted. One of the main results was “perceived customer effectiveness” (i.e. the individual’s belief that his or her efforts will make a difference), which has been particularly pointed out as being useful in predicting actual buying behaviour.

2.3.2 Consumer attitudes, beliefs and behaviours

Consumers’ values and beliefs need to be considered when examining the influences that affect purchasing decisions. Values are enduring beliefs that a given behaviour is desirable or good and include valuing the environment. The values, in which consumers believe, play a key role in their pro-environmental (purchasing) behaviour. Furthermore, values affect

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23 eMarketer (2009), p.3
people’s beliefs, which then have influences on personal norms that lead to consumers’ pro-environmental behaviours.\footnote{28}

A model often used in consumer psychology is Ajzen’s (1991) \textit{Theory of Planned Behaviour}. This theory states that intentions towards an act are determined by attitudes, subjective norms and perceived control; intention may lead to certain behaviour. However many factors can interfere in this process. Factors identified as influencing this process include (1) if the purchase is perceived as low-cost or high-cost, (2) if the product is associated with earlier behaviours and habits, (3) if the consumer perceives that there are alternative products and (4) whether or not the consumer trust the environmental information provided.\footnote{29}

However, environmental concern is not automatically translated in a green way or in green behaviour in general. This phenomenon is known as the value-action gap. The consumer’s daily (pro-environmental) decisions are not necessarily the result of their actual pro-environmental concern. In concrete terms, there is a significant gap between consumers’ beliefs and attitudes compared to their actual behaviour in relation to green consumption. Marketers have to be aware of this gap.

2.3.3 Consumers’ scrutiny and trust in the product

Following Jacquelyn Ottman, “\textit{Consumers don’t buy green in general. They buy specific kinds of green products, but they look at them: Is it sustainably harvested? Is it fair trade? Is it organic? Is it recycled?}”\footnote{30} Today’s consumers are becoming more environmentally conscious than they were five or ten years ago; thus they are more likely to consider a green product or eco-labelled product now than they would have done it five or ten years ago. Marketers have to adapt their green marketing practices to the “new green consumers”.

Concurrently these consumers are becoming more cautious and sceptical to green practices. This is the case especially if the “green performance” of a company or its products is doubtful. “\textit{Consumers must believe in the legitimacy of your products and the specific claims the company is making}”\footnote{31}. They are no longer fooled by what is called “green

\footnote{28}{Pickett-Backer, J. and Ozaki, R. (2008), p. 282}
\footnote{29}{Rex, E. and Baumann, H. (2006), p. 569}
\footnote{30}{eMarketer (2009), p. 2}
\footnote{31}{Ottman, J. (2008), p. 66}
washing”, i.e. practices of companies disingenuously claiming their products and policies as environmentally friendly.

Another current trend described by Jacquelyn Ottman is that “consumers are using the Web for finding out about environmental soundness of various products”\(^{32}\). Green consumers are buying a lot of green products on the Internet which is due to the fact that retailing occurs right now on the Internet. It is well-known that consumers are buying products on the strength of perceived environmental reputations of manufacturers. Therefore, in the same time, they are going to the manufacturers’ Websites to check out the claims or the reputations of a company. This describes the shift to a more proactive green consumer\(^{33}\).

2.4 Characteristics of Belgium and Sweden

In order to compare as well as analyze Belgium and Sweden, two major sources were reviewed and used. At first, a former scientific study about the national cultures developed by Hofstede from which a part of the five-dimension cultural model is used. Secondly, a more recent approach is followed, describing the cultural characteristics and consumption features of both countries relevant for this thesis. These are based on general knowledge as well as a guide on customs and values in both countries, and on statistics and reports.

2.4.1 National cultures according to Hofstede

The world is full of confrontations between people, groups, and nations who think, act and feel in different ways\(^{34}\). People coming from different countries are really concerned and reflected by this differentiation. Hofstede sorted national differences by four dimensions at first. A dimension is “an aspect of a culture that can be measured relative to other cultures”\(^{35}\). The four dimensions have been named power distance (from small to large), collectivism versus individualism, femininity versus masculinity and uncertainty avoidance (from weak to strong)\(^{36}\). A fifth dimension, called confucian dynamism, was added later to this model. Hofstede analyzed a large data base of employee values scores. He collected these values at IBM between 1967 and 1973. They cover seventy-four countries or regions\(^{37}\).

\(^{32}\) eMarketer (2009), p. 3
\(^{33}\) eMarketer (2009), p. 3
\(^{34}\) Hofstede G. and Hofstede G. J. (2004), p. 2
\(^{35}\) Hofstede G. and Hofstede G. J. (2004), p. 23
\(^{36}\) Hofstede G. and Hofstede G. J. (2004), p. 23
\(^{37}\) Hofstede G. and Hofstede G. J. (2004), p. 26
Even if this five-dimension model is quite old, it stayed relevant over the past years and is still topical nowadays. Furthermore, it is quoted by various other authors, and used by several other studies. Finally, this model takes quite a lot of countries into consideration, what allows a right comparison between the cultures of different countries. Thus, this model can be used to compare Belgian and Swedish culture.

For my thesis, I will just take into account the third dimension, which is called *femininity versus masculinity* (for a summary of the findings see tables in the appendices). Indeed, several surveys made about typical demographic characteristics dealt indirectly with this third dimension. Results from surveys pointed out that females were identified as most likely to engage in green consumer behaviour\(^38\); and that green consumers tend to be more female than male\(^39\).

This dimension of *femininity versus masculinity* concerns the fact that in some societies masculine values are more present, whereas in other ones feminine values prevail. This dimension (as the other ones from Hofstede’s five-dimension model) is measured thanks to a specific index related to the dimension: the masculinity index (MAS). The MAS scores represent relative, not absolute, positions of countries or regions\(^40\). Masculinity is unrelated to a country’s degree of economic development: one can find rich and poor masculine and rich and poor feminine countries or regions\(^41\).

Belgium and Sweden score very differently: Tables show that the MAS rates 60 for Belgium Walloon (French-speaking Belgians), 43 for Belgium Flemish (Flemish-speaking Belgians) and only 5 for Sweden\(^42\). Belgium is divided by masculine values on the French-speaking part and by feminine values on the Flemish-speaking part; Sweden is affected by strong feminine values. Sweden is seen as the most feminine-scoring country in the world\(^43\).

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\(^38\) Rex, E. and Baumann, H. (2006), p. 569
\(^39\) eMarketer (2009), p.3
\(^40\) Hofstede G. and Hofstede G. J. (2004), p. 120
\(^41\) Hofstede G. and Hofstede G. J. (2004), p. 120
\(^42\) Hofstede G. and Hofstede G. J. (2004), pp. 120-121
\(^43\) See Hofstede G. and Hofstede G. J. (2004)
A society is called “masculine” when emotional gender roles are clearly distinct: men are supposed to be assertive, tough and focused on material success, whereas women are supposed to be more modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life. In the same way, a society is called “feminine” when emotional gender roles overlap: both men and women are supposed to be modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life.44

Masculine societies show an important concern for earnings and advancement which correspond to the masculine, assertive and competitive social role; whereas feminine societies stress on relations with the others which correspond to the caring and social-environment-oriented feminine role.

2.4.2 Cultural features

2.4.2.1 Belgian cultural characteristics

Before treating Belgian cultural characteristics, it is important to introduce and explain the muddled as well as involved organizational situation in Belgium. This country is conjointly divided in three regions and three communities. The principle of federalization prescribes that the competences are exercised by the State, by the regions or by the communities, according to their areas of competences. Nevertheless, the situation is not that simple partly because of the fact that the three regions and the three communities do not correspond from a geographical aspect.

Indeed, on the one hand, the country is divided into three regions, what refers to a geographical argument. The three regions are the following: the Flemish Region situated in

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44 Hofstede G. and Hofstede G. J. (2004), p. 120
the North, the Brussels-Capital Region approximately in the centre and the Walloon Region situated in the South (see Figure 2 in the appendices for an overview).

On the other hand, the country is divided into three communities, which are distinguished by three different languages, namely Flemish, German and French. The three communities are the following: the “Vlaamse Gemeenschap” where people speak Flemish, the “Communauté Française” where people speak French and finally the “Deutschsprachige Gemeinschaft” where people speak German. The last one compared to the two others is very small and comprises around 70 000 inhabitants⁴⁵ (see Figure 3 in the appendices for an overview).

This distinction based on the three different national languages lead to a significant cultural difference in Belgium. Following Schein, culture exists at the level of nations, regions partly because of common language⁴⁶. This can also be applied to communities, especially because in Belgium the division based on languages is from significant importance.

A significant fact of these different divisions (based on geography as well as on the national languages) is that the cultures of the Southern part and the Northern part of the country differ considerably, the biggest differences being the language difference. Mainly, young French and Flemish speakers at first learn English before trying to learn the language of the Belgian part which they do not belong to⁴⁷. However, this is arguable when considering the German-speaking part. Indeed, the young German speakers need to learn French or Flemish at first if they want to stay in Belgium for their studies or later for their work.

Despite these differences, the Walloons, the Flemish and the German speakers have some points in common. The strong royalty certainly reinforces the national identity. Indeed, Belgium has one royal family that is seen as an institution⁴⁸.

Belgians are usually quite cautious and are characterized by difficulties in trusting claims as well as rules. Therefore, Belgians are suspicious and really hard to convince. They do not like to follow the indications blindly, without any explanation, but like to be very well informed. They do not like taking risks, what also means really strong uncertainty avoidance.

⁴⁵ DG Belgien (2010)
⁴⁷ MacDonald, M. (2005), p.52
⁴⁸ MacDonald, M. (2005), p.53
2.4.2.2 Swedish cultural characteristics

Sweden is seen as a more or less homogeneous country regarding to language and culture. Even if there are some stereotypes about people coming from the North and the South as well as small variations in the language, these do not conduce to strong cultural differences within Sweden compared to those are common in Belgium.

Swedes are usually characterised as open-minded and very helpful. They usually are trusting claims, but like to see the outcomes of them as well as to understand them. They do like taking risks, what also means weak uncertainty avoidance. They have a quite innovative way of thinking and they are more open to every “green technology”.

2.4.3 Consumption features

2.4.3.1 Belgian consumption features

Belgians have a need to be very well informed about the product, the marketing process of the product as well as the firm’s practices. Moreover, Belgians are usually very price sensitive and want value for their money. Thus, quality and price are closely linked in their consumption behaviour. The Belgian population has tremendously lost buying power during the last 20 years\(^\text{49}\). Last but not least, Belgium has a very strong consumer association called “Test-Achats”\(^\text{50}\).

2.4.3.2 Swedish consumption features

The determining factor for Swedish consumers is price, and then followed by quality. Swedish people are likely to obtain information before buying something. They want to have value for money. A large proportion of the population has access to the Internet, and therefore it is used frequently to obtain information as well as to purchase goods\(^\text{51}\).

On average, Swedish consumers have resources and purchasing power well above that of most other European consumers. They are used to a higher standard of living than in most other European countries and have high expectations. Moreover, Swedish consumers are spending more and more money on consumption goods\(^\text{52}\).

\(^{49}\) Export Entreprises (2009)
\(^{50}\) See Association des consommateurs Test-Achats SCRL
\(^{51}\) Export Entreprises (2009)
\(^{52}\) Export Entreprises (2009)
2.5 Gaps in existing research

Many studies and surveys were realised in the past; the most of them focussed on socio-demographic or psychographic qualities of consumers. However, there are no studies that focused their attention on students as consumers. Usually, authors studied the whole group of consumers and did not limit their attention on these young emerging consumers – the students. It could be very interesting to study the behaviour of students and to find out (1) if there is a segment for these consumers in green marketing and (2) if there is an opportunity for firms to engage in this segment.

Furthermore, research in order to study consumer behaviour was generally made within a country. Comparisons between different countries, and particularly between Belgium and Sweden, are not common in green marketing. Therefore, this study represents an opportunity to compare consumers’ behaviour in both countries, which are probably quite different in their approach to green marketing practices.

2.6 Conclusion and analysis of the theoretical part

Green marketing is no more a dream or the way of thinking of a small part of our society. It is a strong reality which will become part of the way we live, the way we do business and more how we function as a society.

The success of green marketing and green consumption is closely linked to the green consumer attitudes, behaviour and beliefs. Moreover, green marketing involves recognising the fact that people have a variety of needs and wants, some of which may conflict. As marketer, one has to understand these consumer needs and wants “even better than consumers themselves do”. Thus, understanding the roots of the green consumption is more than essential.

Even if consumers are nowadays becoming more and more environmental conscious, green consumer segmentation is really hard to define. Moreover, the increased consciousness means in the same time that consumers tend to be more cautious and sceptical to green practices as well as to a green firm’s reputation. They will not accept green washing practices blindly anymore.
According to Hofstede\textsuperscript{53}, Belgium and Sweden are two strongly different countries regarding to the dimension of feminity versus masculinity. Indeed, Sweden is affected by strong feminine values whereas Belgium can be seen as much more masculine in comparison with Sweden. Not to mention that Belgium is characterised by a quite different degree of masculinity within the country because of its cultural differences. It will be enriching to examine if the two countries indeed present this differences or if there are rather similarities in the consumer behaviour.

\textsuperscript{53} See Hofstede G. and Hofstede G. J. (2004)
3 Research method

3.1 Research design

Now that the theoretical background was presented as well as the relevant theories were discussed and argued; the followed methodological approach of the research will be presented and discussed.

Practical research involves that the researcher follows a particular way of doing, step by step; so that any reader can follow and understand your reasoning. Each study has to be drawn following a specific method which can vary consistently depending the purpose of the research.

3.1.1 Research purpose

The green marketing itself but especially the consumer behaviour in the green marketing area is a really interesting and upcoming field for research. Nevertheless, to conduct a research with all consumers from different ages, social groups and all kind of nationalities would be too wide. Thus a delimitation was essential, and finally the segment of the students was chosen for this research. The students represent a real opportunity for the firms and constitute a potentially large group of consumers in favour of environmental protection as well as many other green issues. Moreover, the stress was put on students coming from Belgium and Sweden or studying in one of these two countries. This is firstly due to the fact that the author is coming from Belgium; and secondly that the author is currently studying in Sweden.

3.1.2 Research approach

The research approach can be qualified as either qualitative or quantitative. The choice of the research approach depends on the research problem and its purpose.

If the study stresses on testing and verifying assumptions (trough questionnaires or surveys), with a large number of answers, one can speak of analyzing with quantitative methods. Indeed, one tries to get a large amount of data in order to make generalizations and to compare results. The quantitative aspect is more based on a logical and a critical approach.
But, if the study emphasizes more on observations (case studies, interviews); and focuses on understanding, with fewer respondents, one can speak of analyzing with qualitative methods. The qualitative aspect is based on interpretation and a rational approach.

In order to study the consumer behaviour and attitudes regarding green marketing, or better to say to test several values like demographic characteristics (gender, age, nationality, field of studies and education level) but also price sensitivity, the level of trust in green marketing practices as well as the consciousness of environmental problems and other green issues, in Belgium and Sweden, a rather quantitative research method seemed most appropriate.

3.2 Data collection

In order to gather the appropriate information data to answer the research questions, a combination of primary and secondary data was needed.

Firstly, relevant secondary data was studied from external sources such as research reports, statistics as well as articles and books. This secondary data could not answer satisfactorily the research questions due to gaps in existing and former research regarding the segment of students as part of consumers. Therefore, collecting primary data was essential in order to answer the specified research questions. Indeed, the presented theories were not adapted for students, and no comparison between Belgium and Sweden regarding green marketing was conducted by former research.

So as to collect the primary data, an online questionnaire was drawn up via “Google-docs” and sent out to students. This way of doing was considered as the most convenient since many students dispose of the web nowadays; moreover it allowed to reach much more students as compared to personal meetings and it was the fastest way for all stakeholders. Not to mention the distance between Sweden and Belgium as well as other students coming from different parts of Sweden. In Sweden, the emailing-list of the University database was used whereas in Belgium, the author used his own friends’ network emailing-list since his home University hasn’t got such a database or wouldn’t give him access to an emailing-list.

Through the online questionnaire, the author had a convenient, effective and fast tool; which allowed the respondents to answer and submit the questionnaire within 10 minutes; and which allowed the author to accept as most respondents as possible. It was decided to
design a questionnaire with mostly closed-ended questions as well as a few open-ended questions. The few open-ended questions allowed the respondents to give their own opinion and point of view of the investigated subject; and the author could test out the knowledge of consumers in this area. Whereas the closed-ended questions permitted the respondents to answer in a more easily and faster way since they had just to select from multiple-choice options. The author intended to ensure that no possibility to escape from answering exists. Therefore, response options like “no comment” or “neutral” were purposefully avoided. The questionnaire was carefully formulated, so that respondents couldn’t get the feeling that they are influenced by the author. Moreover, a pre-questionnaire was sent out to some students to get a feedback and to figure out how to improve the final questionnaire. The several questions intended to obtain the following information:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions No.</th>
<th>Type of information</th>
<th>Aim &amp; Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1, 9</td>
<td>Green marketing and eco-labelling knowledge</td>
<td>To test out consumers knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2, 3, 13, 14</td>
<td>Environment or “green” sensitivity / concern</td>
<td>To figure out a consumer typology or segmentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-7</td>
<td>Purchasing behaviour</td>
<td>Potential indicator of the importance of the “greenness” of products while purchasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Price sensitiveness</td>
<td>Indicator of consumer’s price acceptance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-12</td>
<td>Scrutiny and trust in the product</td>
<td>Potential indicator of consumers’ scrutiny and trust in the product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15, 16, 17, 22, 23</td>
<td>Personal data: general</td>
<td>Potential influence of demographic characteristics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17-19</td>
<td>Personal data: cultural</td>
<td>Potential influence of cultural characteristics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19- 21</td>
<td>Personal data: studies related</td>
<td>Potential influence of the choice of studies and level of education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.1

54 See Ghauri, P. and Grønhaug, K. (2002), pp. 96f
The questionnaire\textsuperscript{55} was only drawn up in English; and after due consideration, it has been decided not to translate the questionnaire; since the author thought that in both countries the English language would not represent a barrier for answering it. Moreover, in both countries English is not the native language, but most of the time the second or even third language, so comparisons could be made without the influence of the language skills. All respondents got, attached to the questionnaire, a few lines of explanation about the purpose of the thesis.

Regarding the sample, the selection was made to send to the most possible students of the MID Sweden University as well as to the students of the author’s home university, University of Liège (ULg). Furthermore, some other universities were contacted in order to get respondents coming from different parts of both countries and also coming from different field of studies. The author sent out about 2500 questionnaires together in both countries, Belgium and Sweden, in order to get as many respondents as possible.

3.3 \textit{Data presentation and analysis}

Following Ghauri and Grønhaug, “Data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data”\textsuperscript{56}. The set of obtained answers from the questionnaire were transferred in an Excel-sheet in order to classify and later analyze them.

Firstly the answers were classified by country since the final aim is to make a comparison between Belgium and Sweden. It is to mention, that since some people also coming from other countries (than the two initially meant to be studied) answered to the questionnaire, it was decided to group together all nationalities different from Belgians and Swedes in a third group, called “Others”. After due consideration, it was decided not to use this data for the purpose of this study.

All respondents got a number, what assured them to stay anonymous. Then, within the responses of each country or group, specific values and characteristics were chosen and identified in order to analyze the situation in this country or group. Afterwards, the results were compared and some of them were linked to cultural aspects.

\textsuperscript{55} See Appendix A
\textsuperscript{56} Ghauri, P. and Grønhaug, K. (2002), p. 137
3.4 Validity and Reliability

The quality of a research as well as the precision of its measurements is expressed through the concepts of validity and reliability.

3.4.1 Validity

Validity is a term often used in statistics and shows how well a variable measures what it is supposed to; but validity is also used in the field of research design. More precisely, in this field, validity is defined as “the strength of our conclusions, inferences or propositions”\(^ {57}\). Better to say, the term actually refers to the degree to which a study supports the intended conclusion drawn from the results. Therefore, the results of a study need to show a certain validity to get accepted and recognised.

Three different parts of validity are often highlighted for a quantity research: construct, internal and external validity.

3.4.1.1 Construct validity

Construct validity, which is probably the most important part of validity, can be defined as “the extent to which an operationalization measures the concept which it purports to measure” (Zaltman et al., 1977: 44)\(^ {58}\). Construct validity is from great importance since if the study lacks construct validity, the finding are meaningless, destroying in the same time the internal and external validity of the findings\(^ {59}\). This show us how construct validity is necessary for meaningful and interpretable research findings.

For the research, a questionnaire with closed-ended as well as a few open-ended questions was used. This questionnaire was based on general commonly accepted theories used in existing literature. Moreover the information, which the author got from the sample of students, allowed answering the research questions; so that the construct validity can be assumed.


\(^{58}\) Ghauri, P. and Grønhaug, K. (2002), p. 70

\(^{59}\) Ghauri, P. and Grønhaug, K. (2002), p. 72
3.4.1.2 Internal validity

Internal validity refers “to the extent to which we can infer that a causal relationship exists between two (or more) variables”\(^60\). The theoretical background, which was based on past and existing research as well as formal knowledge from different literature, leads to the research in a logical way. There are good assumptions that what the author did in the study caused partly what the author observed to happen, even if there stay still some doubts. Nevertheless, this study stays probably valid until another study finds some divergent elements.

3.4.1.3 External validity

External validity relates “to what extent the findings can be generalized to particular persons, settings, as well as across types of persons, settings and times...”\(^61\) Only the fact that the study was conducted in two specific countries, Belgium and Sweden, as well as that the population was only represented by students, make a specific situation. Moreover, the study was mainly conducted in two universities, “University of Liège (ULg)” and “MID Sweden University”, which both have probably some major fields of studies. Finally, the author tried to diversify the field of studies’ respondents by sending out the questionnaire to the different faculties of the universities; but since the author is studying business engineering, it is not surprising that most represented studies are related to business or economics. All these considerations make the external validity of the results limited to this specific situation. Therefore, it is not possible to generalize the findings to the whole population of students, let alone to the consumers in general; and you cannot transfer the findings to other countries because of the cultural differences between different countries.

3.4.2 Reliability

Reliability from a statistical viewpoint means how reproducible the measures are on a specific retest; in the field of research design is also defined as “the consistency of your measurement or the degree to which an instrument measures the same way each time it is

\(^{60}\) Ghauri, P. and Grønhaug, K. (2002), p. 71
used under the same condition with the same subjects"\(^6^2\). In both cases, it refers to the stability of a measure.

For writing the thesis, several books, articles and scientific databases as well as web pages have been used. One can assume that almost all of them, which were written by researchers, professors or even doctors, are based on reliable data. Moreover, the author of the thesis tried to use at best his acquired knowledge in order to write a reliable thesis.

Concerning the practical part including its own research, the interpretation of the obtained results was effected with the best knowledge, experience and carefulness of the researcher. For the respondents -even if some of them were probably inexperienced in this field of marketing- it can be assumed that they answered the questionnaire with their best will and good intentions (since they took their time to do it). So, it can be assumed that the collected data are reliable, as long as people answered honestly.

3.5 Limitations of this research

Every study as well as research method needs a self-reflexion; one has to stay realistic and recognize the limits of his achievement as well as the limitations of his research. There are some limitations to this research due to different kinds of reasons that I will explain more in detail now.

At first, there is the aspect of cross-national comparison. Terms, meanings and definitions may differ from one country to another. What is really a student? What is a student job? In Sweden, it is very common to have a part-time job (which can not be considered as just a “student job”) besides the studies, whereas in Belgium students usually have small student’s jobs, but very seldom a combination of a real part-time job and studies.

The samples of respondents in both countries show different characteristics regarding their composition. Considering the age of the respondents for example, the average differs consistently: in Sweden the average is situated at 27.64 years whereas in Belgium the average is only 20.92 years. This is due to the fact that people in Belgium usually go to higher or university education directly after their secondary school; contrary to Sweden where people quite often get some work or abroad experience before going to university. This huge age difference is also explained through the previous argument about jobs besides studies.

\(^6^2\) See [http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/tutorial/Colosi/Icolosi2.htm](http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/tutorial/Colosi/Icolosi2.htm)
In the same way, the field of studies is liable to delimitation. The major field of studies is quite different in both countries for the obtained responses: social studies are prevailing in Sweden, whereas in Belgium business sciences and economics constitute the main studies. Moreover, the respondents do not cover all fields of studies in an equal way. Some fields of studies are underrepresented compared to the dominating fields of studies (social sciences, economics and business sciences). This does not allow comparison between the different fields of studies. Still concerning the field of studies, the fact that a relatively high proportion of people could not identify themselves with one of the proposed fields, shows that the research did not cover all field of studies.

Not to mention the role of the native language. Since English is not the native language in both countries –Swedish is the native language of most people in Sweden, whereas Belgium has even three different natives languages depending on which part of the country people are coming from- it may have occurred that some people misunderstood some questions or maybe did not get the sense of some terms. This was a risk known from the author before starting his thesis; but in the other way it allowed a better comparison since both countries are concerned with this non-corresponding native language; and the author assumed that people usually have quite good English skills.

The short period of time during which potential respondents had access to the questionnaire -roughly one month- was not ideal. It could have been interesting to let the questionnaire a bit longer online in order to collect more answers and especially to reach more students coming from different universities.

Moreover, the time of the questionnaire was slightly unfavourable, at least in Belgium, since the exam period for Belgian students was approaching so that probably quite a lot if students would not “waste” their time by answering the questionnaire.

Another point concerning Belgium was the distance between the countries, since the author was here in Sweden, he could not reach the people he could have reached if he had been home. This also concerns the e-mailing list, which the home university was not able to give to the author or even just transfer the questionnaire to the students. All this explains the huge difference between the numbers of respondents in the two countries –the research got 384 Swedish respondents, but only 203 Belgian ones.

Finally, in Belgium, the repartition of the students coming from the three parts of Belgium varies strongly. While they are 145 with French as native language, they are only 34
with German as native language and only 24 with Flemish as native language. It prevents to make a right comparison between the three parts of Belgium and to underline the cultural differences between people which were pointed out in the cultural part.

3.6 Conclusion

In this chapter the research method, which was used during the time of the research in order to answer the research questions, was presented. The design, the data collection and motivations for this proceeding were given. Moreover, the validity and reliability as well as some limitations of this study were explained.
4 Results and analysis of the own research

Now that the research method was presented and discussed, the results as well as analysis of the own survey will be exposed. The following procedure for each research question will be adopted: at first, results for Belgium will be presented and analyzed; this will be followed by the results for Sweden and finally a comparison of both countries will complete each research question analysis.

Nevertheless, to start the analysis, some background information is needed and will be presented referring to general information (like gender, age, monthly income), cultural information (nationality) as well as studies related information (field of studies and level of courses).

4.1 Background information

The background information are very useful for this research in order to have an overview of the factors -i.e. demographic, cultural or studies related- which could have a potential influence on the study outcomes (see figures 4-15 in the appendices).

4.1.1 Background information from Belgium

In Belgium (see figures 8-12 in the appendices), the questionnaire was answered by 203 students coming from the three parts of Belgium. Even if the most respondents speak French as native language (145 students), there are also some students with Flemish (24) and German (34) as respective native languages. The representation of women and men is almost equal since 102 women and 101 participated. The average age of students is 20,92 years, which is actually not that surprising since students are usually quite young when they are studying or even when they finish their studies at university. Moreover, young people in Belgium usually go to higher education or university directly after their secondary school. Work or abroad experience before starting some higher education or university is not that important to them.

Concerning information related to studies, the three major identified fields of studies are: Business sciences, business engineering & administrative studies (71 students) followed by Economics (53) and Engineering & Technology (14). After that, several different fields of studies are following. These results are not surprising since the author is studying business engineering in the Business Faculty of the “University of Liège (ULg)”. The student’s profile is
mostly from Undergraduate/Bachelor level (58.62%) and Masters level (36.95%). Doctorate/PhD level represents just a small part and a few cannot identify themselves with one option (“Others”). Here, the fact that the author is studying on the Bachelor level C explains the results.

Regarding the monthly income, almost one third claim they haven’t any monthly income (32.51%), and the rest concentrate mostly between 1€-100€ and 101€-300€, which together account for 54.68%. There are very few students with more than 500€ per month in Belgium which is due to the fact that students in Belgium usually have just small student’s jobs besides their studies, but they cannot combine studies with a real part-time job.

4.1.2 Background information from Sweden

In Sweden (see figures 13-15 in the appendices), the questionnaire got 398 answers from students studying mostly in the Jämtland area. The proportion of women and men varies, since 234 women (60.94% of the Swedish respondents) and 150 men (39.06% of the Swedish respondents) answered. This might be explained by the fact that the MID Sweden University counts more women than men, whereby this remains a hypothetical explanation. The average age of students is 27.64 years which is relatively old. Indeed, in Sweden, young people get quite often some work or abroad experience before going later to university or higher education.

The three major fields of studies are: Social studies (75 students) followed by Education & teaching (46) and Computer Science & IT (41). After that, several different fields of studies are following. Indeed, social studies, education & teaching as well as computer science and IT are fields of studies which are all three very common here in the Jämtland area. The student’s profile is with a large majority of Undergraduate/Bachelor level (75%), followed by Masters level (17.71%). The Doctorate/PhD level represents just a small part and a few cannot identify themselves with one option (“Others”).

The monthly income of students here in Sweden varies largely. There are still almost one third who say they haven’t any monthly income (31.51%), but then the repartition is more diversified and there are quite a lot of people with a monthly income between 501€-1000€ which account for 19.01%. Even in the higher categories of the monthly income you can find some students. These results show and confirm that Swedish students have generally part-time jobs besides their studies or are older and have already some work experience.
4.1.3 **Comparison of the background information**

Through the background information, it appears already that the situation and collected data are quite different for both countries; and that the results given by the questionnaires have to be discussed separately at first before trying to be compared to each other subsequently.

At first, when regarding the gender and age information, which are both demographic characteristics, the sample gives different information for both countries. The gender, which is equally distributed on the Belgian data, is not that equally distributed on the Swedish data. This different gender distribution has to be kept in mind when assessing later if “green consumers really tend to be more female than male”. The differences in the average age in both countries were already expected by the author. Students in Sweden seemed to be older than in Belgium, and this collected data confirms it. This partly reflects the differences in the way people think and the respective cultures. While in Belgium students try to finish their studies as fast as they can in order to enter the labour market with on average 21-23 years, students in Sweden often - but not always- just start their studies with 21-23 years.

Then, concerning the monthly income of the students, a huge difference appears when comparing both countries. While in Belgium 87,19% of the students have no job or are under the amount of 300€ monthly; the situation in Sweden is quite different since still 37,24% are over the sum of 300€. This is due to the different situation of the students in both countries. Students in Sweden usually combine part-time work with studies, which is also facilitated through a greater freedom in the class schedule; whereas in Belgium the strong class schedule (with more than 25-30 hours classes a week) does not allow such a job. Students in Belgium rather work at the weekend or only in the summer in a so called “student job”.

The differences in the major fields of studies will not be discussed more in details since (1) it is not the purpose of the study and (2) the research did not cover all fields of studies, which is shown through the high proportion of students who cannot identify themselves with a field of students (around 8% chose “Others”).

4.2 **The value-action gap: Environmental concern and buying behaviour of consumers**

It is well-known from past studies that quite often environmental concern is not automatically translated in a green way or in green behaviour in general. This phenomenon
is known as the **value-action gap**. The consumer’s daily (pro-environmental) decisions are not necessarily the result of their actual pro-environmental concern.

### 4.2.1 Belgium and the value-action gap

In Belgium, students show a high concern for environmental protection, green living and other green issues. They were asked if “more environmental protection actions are needed and it is essential to promote green living” (see Figure 4.1). The answers show that together 195 out of 203 do strongly agree (+2) or either agree (+1). Furthermore, on related questions on how important environmental issues or problems (see question 2 in the appendices) are to them, students responded by a large majority “important” or even “very important”.

Then, asked additionally about if they would not be “ready to make any changes in living habits” (see figure 4.2), the answers already decrease comparing to the previous question. Indeed, 28 students are not ready to make any changes in living habits. There still remain 175 students who are ready to make changes, but this decrease of 20 students compared to the previous question, shows already a bit that people’s concern and behaviour are two distinct things.

![Figure 4.1](image1.png)

**3. a) More environmental protection actions are needed and it is essential to promote green living**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree</th>
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<tr>
<td>+2</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+1</td>
<td>82</td>
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<td>-1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Figure 4.2](image2.png)

**3. b) Environmental protection is a key concern but I am not ready to make any changes in living habits**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>People</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>+1</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-1</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-2</td>
<td>115</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Moreover, when it comes to the questions about their buying behaviour as well as if they take environmental considerations into account while buying products, the results show how actual this value-action gap is.
By answering if they take environmental consideration into account while buying products (see Figure 4.4), only 6 students answered with “always”, 85 students with “often”, 104 students with “seldom” and finally 8 students with “never”. Even if this question deals first and foremost about the frequency, it gives a clear overview of how rarely students are taking into consideration environmental concerns while buying a product. This high amount of students, who responded with “seldom” or even “never”, shows that these students are mostly not behaving that much in an environmentally-concerned way as they claimed it in the previous questions.

Finally, the question on how often they buy environment-friendly, “green” or eco-labelled products (see Figure 4.3) gives nearly the same results as the previous question. This confirms that students are maybe showing high pro-environmental concern, but then behave quite differently while purchasing products. The value-action gap, already measured in past studies by many other authors, is again a quite important and real phenomenon.

4.2.2 Sweden and the value-action gap

In Sweden, students show a high concern for environmental protection, green living and other green issues. They were asked if “more environmental protection actions are needed and if it is essential to promote green living” (see Figure 4.5). The answers show that a large part of the students, 367 out of 384, do “strongly agree” (+2) either “agree” (+1); with a higher proportion for the first option. On related questions on how important environmental issues or problems (see question 2 in the appendix) are to them, students responded with a high rate “important” or even “very important”.

38
Then, they were asked if they would not be “ready to make any changes in living habits” (see figure 4.6); the answers decrease comparing to the previous question. Indeed, 95 students out of 384 are not ready to make any changes in living habits. There still remain 289 students who are ready to make changes, but compared to the 367 students in the previous question, there is a significant decrease of 78 students (it represents a decrease of 20.31%), which shows already that people’s concern and behaviour are two really distinct fields.

Moreover, when it comes to the questions about their buying behaviour as well as if they take environmental considerations into account while buying products, the results show how topical this value-action gap really is.

By answering if they take environmental consideration into account while buying products (see Figure 4.8), 21 students answered with “always”, 216 students with “often”, 135 with “seldom” and 12 students with “never”. This shows that a part of the students are taking environmental concerns into consideration while buying a product quite less often.
This group of students is, like the Belgian students, not acting as environmentally-concerned as they claimed it in the previous questions.

Finally, the question on how often they buy environment-friendly, “green” or eco-labelled products (see Figure 4.7) gives nearly the same results as the previous question. Even if still quite a high proportion of students (61,45%) -which is the majority- answered with “always” or “often”; the number of answers “seldom” or even “never” is quite high. This confirms that students are showing high pro-environmental concern, but then behave quite differently while purchasing products. The value-action gap, already measured in past studies by many other authors, is again quite important.

4.2.3 Comparison of the value-action gap

The value-action gap is a real phenomenon, which is a frequent in both countries. The results show and confirm that there is a real gap between consumers’ ecological beliefs and their actual environmental-friendly buying behaviour. The value-action gap is a phenomenon of quite similar extent in both countries. Belgium and Sweden show similar results, even if for Sweden the results are maybe more meaningful since more people participated to the survey in this country than in Belgium.

4.3 Consumer scrutiny and trust

Consumers are becoming more cautious and sceptical to green practices. This is especially true when the “green performance” of a company or its products is doubtful. “Consumers must believe in the legitimacy of your products and the specific claims the company is making”\(^{63}\). Moreover, there is a current trend which shows that “consumers are using the Web for finding out about environmental soundness of various products”\(^{64}\).

4.3.1 Scrutiny and trust of Belgian consumers

At first, the students were asked on “how important the company’s environmental reputation when buying “green” products is” in their opinion (see Figure 4.9). A large majority, 131 students in all (which represents 64,53%), responded with “very important”

\(^{63}\) Ottman, J. (2008), p. 66
\(^{64}\) eMarketer (2009), p. 3
(+2) or “important” (+1). This shows that a large majority of students really pays attention to the company’s environmental reputation while buying “green” products.

Then, the students were asked if they “usually trust a firms’ claimed green marketing practices” (see Figure 4.10). A small majority of 106 students (52.21%) answered with “Yes +2” or “+1”. Even if there is a majority responding that they generally trust a firm’s claimed green marketing practices, one can deduce, thanks to the lot of answers in the middle of the two extremes, that most students are not totally convinced.

This small majority is quite surprising since Belgians are usually described as quite cautious and characterized by difficulties in trusting claims as well as rules (see section “Belgians cultural characteristics”). Moreover, Belgians are suspicious and really hard to convince. A larger sample could have been useful in order to study the question a bit more into detail.

Moreover, the students were asked if they “try to get information about the environmental soundness of various products or firms” (see figure 4.11). The results are quite surprising since 45 students responded with “never”, 128 students with “seldom”, only 29 students with “often” and 1 student answered with “always”. Again, this is a question of frequency, but the research points out, that students relatively seldom try to get information about the environmental soundness of products. Students are not that curious or showing environmental scrutiny as expected.

Finally, when asked if the students use “the Web to get this information” (see figure 4.12), the results show a very small majority that chose the option “often”, followed by the option “seldom” but also a quite similar proportion for the option “always”. These results let suppose that, when and if students try to get information about the environmental
soundness of a product, then they tend to use the Web quite often. This confirms the
currently observed trend described in the interview conducted by Ottman J.⁶⁵

4.3.2 Scrutiny and trust of Swedish consumers

At first, the students were asked on “how important the company’s environmental reputation when buying “green” products is” to their eyes (see Figure 4.13). A large majority, 290 students in total (which represents 75,52%), answered with “very important” (+2) or “important” (+1). This shows that Swedish students usually pay attention to the company’s environmental reputation when buying “green” products.

Then, the students were asked if they “usually trust a firms’ claimed green marketing practices” (see Figure 4.14). A smaller, but still quite large majority (compared to the question before) of 231 students (60,16%) respond with “Yes +2” or “+1”. This majority shows that Swedes are usually confident towards a firm’s claimed green marketing practices.

⁶⁵ See eMarketer (2009)
Moreover, the students were asked if they “try to get information about the environmental soundness of various products or firms” (see figure 4.15). The results are surprising since 62 students answered with “never”, 237 students with “seldom”, 80 students with “often” and 5 students responded with “always”. The research points out that apparently students relatively seldom try to get information about the environmental soundness of products. Swedish students are not that curious or showing environmental scrutiny as it could have been expected. It can be again interpreted that Swedes are quite confident and do not necessarily need to find out information about the environmental soundness.

Finally, when asked if the students use “the Web to get this information” (see figure 4.16), the results show a large majority that chose the option “often”. These results let suppose that, when and if students try to get information about the environmental soundness, they are using the Web quite often. These results confirm on one side that Swedes, Swedish students in this case, frequently use the Web to obtain information (see section “Swedish consumption features”); and on the other side, the currently observed trend described in the interview conducted with Ottman J.66

4.3.3 Comparison in both countries

The results are going in a similar direction; even if they are more pronounced in Sweden. Swedish students (75,52%) attach more importance than their Belgians counterparts (64,53%) to a company’s environmental reputation when buying “green” products. In Sweden a large part of the population is confident in a firm’s claimed green marketing

66 See eMarketer (2009)
practices; whereas in Belgium there is just a small majority. Indeed, Belgian students are not totally convinced of a firm’s claimed green marketing practices. Both countries show a medium concern for getting information about the environmental soundness of products. Finally, for the question of using the Web, Swedish students tend to use the Web more than their Belgian counterparts. Some of these results, but not for the same reasons in both countries, could be partly explained through Belgians and Swedish cultural characteristics as well as consumption features.

4.4 Consumer price sensitiveness

The question of the price sensitiveness is interesting since it is a well-known fact that the price sensitiveness issue for consumers in general, but in this case especially for students, is one of the most important issues in daily student life.

There was also another aim regarding a relation between the monthly income and the price sensitiveness of students, but because of a badly formulated question as well as a lack of understanding of this question, the data could not be used as expected.

4.4.1 The case of Belgium

At first, students were asked on “how important the price of the product when buying a “green” product” is to them (see figure 4.17). The majority of the students, 166 out of 203 (81.77%), answered that they find it “very important” (+2) or “important” (+1). This is not surprising at all, since students are always looking for saving their money when it comes to buy something.

![Figure 4.17](image-url)
Subsequently, they were asked about the price sensitiveness, i.e. “Up to how much more are they prepared to pay for environment-friendly or “green” products?” (see figure 4.18). The category of those who would pay from 1% to 10% more was chosen by 72 out of 203 respondents (35,47%), which is the category with the most respondents. It is followed by the category ranging from 11% to 20% with 65 respondents (32,02%) and finally the category ranging from 21% to 30% with 38 respondents (18,72%). The categories above a price increase of 30% are not that much represented; they are 17 students (8,37%) in the last cited category; and even 8 students (3,94%) who are not ready to pay more for environmental-friendly products.

![Figure 4.18](image)

The fact that the results mainly range from 1% to 20 % is not that surprising since (1) students in Belgium have not that high monthly incomes and (2) consumers in Belgium are quite price sensitive. They want value for money, but before they have to be convinced of the quality of the green product (see section “Belgian consumption features”).

4.4.2 The case of Sweden

At first, students were asked on “how important the price of the product when buying a “green” product is” to them (see figure 4.19). The majority of the students, 311 out of 384 (80,98%), responded that they find it “very important” (+2) or “important” (+1). This was expected, since students are always looking for saving their money when it comes to buy something.
Then, they were asked about the price sensitiveness, i.e. “Up to how much more are they prepared to pay for environmentally friendly or “green” products?” (see figure 4.20). The category of those who would pay from 1% to 10% was chosen by 146 out of 384 respondents (38.02%), which is the category with the most respondents. It is followed by the category ranging from 11% to 20% with 121 respondents (31.51%) and finally the category ranging from 21% to 30% with 64 respondents (16.67%). The categories above a price increase of 30% are not that much represented, they are 27 students (7.03%) in the last cited category; and even 26 students (6.77%) who are not ready to pay more for environmentally-friendly products.

8. Up to how much more are you prepared to pay for environmentally friendly or “green” products?

Figure 4.20
The fact that the results are concentrated in the range from 1% to 20% is a bit more surprising and was not that expected since (1) students in Sweden usually have a higher monthly income and (2) on average, Swedish consumers have resources and purchasing power well above that of most other European consumers. Moreover, Swedish consumers are spending more and more (see section “Swedish consumption features”). And finally, contrary to what the author first thought, this can not be extended to students in Sweden.

4.4.3 Comparison in both countries

Once again, the results are going in the same direction but are very slightly different. The expected differences regarding the price sensitiveness, i.e. that Sweden would have a higher percentage of students accepting to pay more for environmentally-friendly or “green” products, between the two countries are not present. It was even going in the other direction; Belgian students are slightly more ready to pay more for these products.

4.5 Green consumer: female versus male

At last, the question about the gender of the “green” consumer, “female versus male”, will be discussed. Some past studies pointed out that “females” were identified as most likely to engage in green consumer behaviour. This was confirmed by Jacquelyn Ottman, who states that: “The green consumers tend to be more female than male”.

In order to discuss and analyze this gender issue the author will now take some of the previous discussed research questions into consideration and compare the situation of women and men.

4.5.1 The case of Belgium

At first, the question about “environmental protection” (see figure 4.21) was compared. The results show that women agree more that environmental protection is needed than men. Together 97.06% of the women responded with a positive degree of agreement; whereas 95.05% of the men respond positively. Even if the results are slightly different, they could be the first information that women are actually more likely to engage in green consumer

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68 eMarketer (2009), p.3
behaviour than men. This assertion remains to be analyzed in further details and confirmed by other following data.

3. a) More environmental protection actions are needed and it is essential to promote green living

Female versus Male

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree of agreement</th>
<th>% of people</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>+2</td>
<td>57.84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+1</td>
<td>53.47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-1</td>
<td>39.22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-2</td>
<td>41.58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0.99%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4.21

Now, it’s time to deal with the comparison on the frequency of “green” purchases (see figure 4.22). The results are more significant here. Indeed, 56.86% of the women responded that they are often purchasing environment-friendly or “green” products against 27.72% for their male counterparts. The proportions for the options “seldom” and “never” confirm the results, since only 39.22% of the women responded “seldom” against 62.38% for the men and 0.98% of the women answered “never” against 7.92% of the men.

These results about the frequency showed that women buy much more often “green” or environmental-friendly products than men do.

4. How often do you buy environmental-friendly, “green” or eco-labelled products?

Female versus Male

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>% of people</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>2.94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td>1.98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seldom</td>
<td>27.72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>62.38%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4.22
Moreover, the answers on the question “if consumers try to get information about the environmental soundness of various products” (see figure 4.23) show differences in favour of women. Indeed, women try to get more often information about the environmental soundness of various products than men do it. Note that the difference is here not as consequent as it is for the previous question. A quite high percentage of people do not try to get information about the environmental soundness of products.

![Figure 4.23](image-url)

### Frequency

<table>
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<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
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<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>0,98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td>18,63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seldom</td>
<td>58,82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>67,33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Last but not least, asked about “how much more they are prepared to pay for environmentally friendly or “green” products” (see figure 4.24), women are ready to pay more than men, all data considered. Even if for the category “>50%” men have a higher percentage than women; the categories ranging from 21% to 30% as well as from 31%-40% show that women are ready to pay more than men. Especially, if you take the four highest price categories above the “20%” line, the results are 30,39% of women compared to 23,76% of men. We can conclude, even if the difference is slight, that women are ready to pay more than men.
When considering all results, one could conclude that women are more likely to engage in green consumer behaviour. Even if sometimes the difference in behaviour in the collected data is quite small, the several results show that the typical Belgian “green” student turns out to be rather female than male.

4.5.2 The case of Sweden

Before starting to compare the different questions and to find out if the “green” Swedish student is more female than male, the author would like to add small information. Unlike Belgian respondents for which we have an almost equivalent distribution of men and women, the Swedish respondents are composed of much more women (60.94%) than men (39.06%). This could not lead to any conclusions about the prevailing gender of the “green” Swedish student, but this is to keep in mind when analyzing data.

At first, the question about “environmental protection” (see figure 4.25) was compared. The results show that women agree more that environmental protection is needed than men. Together, 97.86% of the women responded with a positive degree of agreement - among which 75.64% chose for “strongly agree” (+2) against 92% of the men. Even if the results are just slightly different, they could be, as for the Belgian case, the first information
that women are more likely to engage in green consumer behaviour than men. This assertion stays to be analyzed in further detail and confirmed by other following data.

![Figure 4.25](image)

Then, it is the turn of the question about the frequency of “green” purchases to be compared (see figure 4.26). Here the results are slightly significant. Indeed, 61,54% of the women responded that they are often purchasing environmental-friendly or “green” products against 50% for the men. The proportions for the options “seldom” and “never” confirm the results, since only 33,76% of the women responded “seldom” against 40,62% for the men and 0,43% of the women answered “never” against 4,67% of the men.

These results about the frequency show that women buy more often, but actually not that much more as maybe could have been expected, “green” or environmental-friendly products than their male counterparts do.

![Figure 4.26](image)
Furthermore, the results on the question “if consumers try to get information about the environmental soundness of various products” (see figure 4.27) show differences in favour of women. Indeed, women try to get more often information about the environmental soundness of various products than men do it. Note that again the difference is here not that consequent.

![Figure 4.27](image-url)

Last but not least, when asked about “how much more they are prepared to pay for environmentally friendly or “green” products” (see figure 4.28), it appears that women are ready to pay more than men, all data considered. Even if for the category “>50%” men have a higher percentage than women; the following price categories till the 10% line show that women are ready to pay more than men. Indeed, if you take the five highest price categories above this “10%” border, the results are 60,69% of women compared to 46,67% of men. The difference is quite huge; therefore one can conclude that women are ready to pay much more than their male counterparts.
When considering all results, one can conclude that women are more likely to engage in green consumer behaviour. In each situation, women are prevailing, and even if sometimes the difference in behaviour for a question in the collected data is smaller, several results show that the typical Swedish “green” student tends to be rather female than male.

4.5.3 Belgium versus Sweden

Comparing the data in both countries will not provide much more information since the situation is quite similar. The gender difference in data seemed to be more pronounced in the Swedish data compared to the Belgian data. In fact, it depends on the question.

On the one hand, in question 4 about the buying behaviour, the gender difference is more important in Belgium than in Sweden. It is also true for question 11, which was meant to get information about the environmental soundness of products, and where Belgium again get a more pronounced gender difference.

On the other hand, the answers of question 3 about the importance of environmental protection show a more pronounced gender difference in Sweden than in Belgium. Finally, the question 8 about the acceptance of price increase also gives a more important gender difference in Sweden than in Belgium.
It is not possible to draw a conclusion on which of both countries is more characterised than the other by a female or a male “green” (consumer) student. Both countries confirm the assertion that the green consumer, students in this case, tend to be rather female than male.

A bigger sample, at least on the Belgian side, in order to reach approximately the same number of students as in the Swedish sample, could have been useful in order to compare the situation in both countries a better way.
5 Discussion and conclusion

Now that the results were presented, analyzed and discussed in detail, the final discussion with the conclusion including the most important findings will be presented. The contribution to research as well as implications for companies will be exposed. The achievements of the aims will be discussed and finally some recommendations will be drawn.

5.1 Concluding findings and comparison

Students in both countries, in Belgium as well as in Sweden, show a really high concern for environmental protection and other “green” issues. The results were clear and of similar extent in both countries.

However, environmental concern is not automatically translated in a green way or in green behaviour in general. This phenomenon, known as the value-action gap, is a real phenomenon frequent in both countries. Indeed, the consumer’s daily (pro-environmental) decisions are not necessarily the result of their actual pro-environmental concern. In concrete terms, there is a significant gap between consumers’ concerns compared to their actual behaviour in relation to green consumption.

The scrutiny and trust in companies’ claims are another important issue. The results are going in a similar direction; even if they are more pronounced in Sweden. Indeed, Swedish students feel more confident towards a firm’s claimed green marketing practices; whereas in Belgium just a small majority thinks they are trustworthy.

Moreover, both countries show a medium concern for getting information about the environmental soundness of products. This is not seen as a priority by students, they seem not to be that curious or showing high environmental scrutiny. Apparently they do not especially need to find out information about the environmental soundness.

If students are trying to find out information, the use of the Web is quite common. In Sweden, students predominantly use it, whereas in Belgium students do not use it that much. These findings confirm partly the use of the Web described in the interview with Ottmann J. to find out about the environmental soundness of various products.

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69 eMarketer (2009), p. 3
Regarding the gender difference, the findings show that, as predicted and pointed out in past research\textsuperscript{70}, women are really more likely to engage in green consumer behaviour. In each situation, the women are prevailing, and even if sometimes gender difference in behaviour in the collected data is small, the several results confirm distinctly that the “green” consumer tends to be rather female than male.

Finally, there are in fact much more similarities between Belgium and Sweden than differences. The findings are quite often from a similar extent -even if some small differences always appeared and that the findings in Sweden were frequently a bit more pronounced for Sweden than for Belgium. Even the gender issue, is not more important in Sweden than in Belgium. This, despite the fact of the third dimension of Hofstede’s work “femininity versus masculinity” with its masculinity index (MAS), which pointed out that Sweden is considered as a feminine country compared to Belgium which is more masculine or at least divided between masculine and feminine values (see section about Hofstede and national cultures).

5.2 Achievement of the aims

Several research questions were developed in the beginning of the thesis. Juts in order to remind them to the reader, the author wanted to find out about: How consumers, particularly students, in Belgium as well as in Sweden, take environmental issues into consideration as they buy and search for products? How are they acting in order to find out information? Do they trust in companies’ claims and green products? Who are these green consumers: more female or either male? Finally, are there similarities or differences when comparing both countries?

After presenting the theoretical part, which tried to link the research questions to existing theories taken from scientific literature and data, a quantitative study was conducted. This quantitative study, which got more respondents than initially expected, collected quite a lot of data, which after being analyzed, led to findings and some conclusions. The findings of his own research allowed the author to answer almost all his

research questions; and when it was not the case, then at least, the questions were partly answered.

The value-action gap was discussed and confirmed findings from past studies as well as responded to one part of the research questions. This value-action gap is a real, identified and frequent phenomenon for consumers, and more precisely, in the context of this research, for students.

The scrutiny and trust of consumers are two issues which give us interesting results and confirm partly what the author could find in the literature review.

The discussion of the gender the “green” (consumer) student is from great relevance for the study; and conducts to the expected result that the green consumer indeed -as described in past studies- tends to be rather female than male.

Much more similarities than differences were found between the two compared countries, which are Belgium and Sweden. It seems that Belgian and Swedish students have much more in common than initially expected by the author; they respond in a similar extent to green marketing practices and “green” products.

However, some parts presented in the theoretical part which aimed to answer and go further in the research, could not be used afterwards. More precisely, the part concerning the consumer typology could finally not be applied because of (1) some questions were not detailed or precise enough; (2) some questions were probably badly formulated questions.

Moreover, the part about Hofstede’s work had not the initially intended implications in the research questions. Nevertheless, these two parts were kept in the theoretical background because it could be helpful for further research and it gives good information to show how different culture is.

The idea of the author to compare the three communities in Belgium was not feasible since the survey got too few respondents coming from the three different parts of Belgium. Indeed, there were a high proportion of French-speakers, but the two other parts were underrepresented.
All in all, it can be stated that the main research questions have been answered. The study points out that the situations are quite similar in Belgium and in Sweden. However it has to be kept in mind that (1) the sample is not that big; and (2) the sample is not equally represented in both countries. A more equal distribution would probably allow a better comparison.

5.3 Possible further research and recommendations

Further research in the green marketing area is desirable since this topic is quite large and has not been studied enough so far. Moreover, green marketing is probably one of the future solutions in marketing; and companies will probably have to invest in this field of marketing in the next years if they want to sustain on the market.

This research, which was just about a tiny part of the green marketing topic, could need some improvements as well as further research. Indeed, much more respondents, especially from Belgium could have been very useful in order to make a more valuable comparison between Belgium and Sweden.

Further research should put the stress on students or younger people. This research let suppose that this type of consumers, which are the students, was really in favour of green marketing practices and other green issues. This was also already pointed out in past studies. Further research and companies should concentrate on students, since it could be assumed that students are a real opportunity for companies.

I could advice a company that would like to invest and create a marketing strategy for an environment-friendly product targeted at student: at first, to understand students’ needs and wants since they are quite different than those of the other consumers. Moreover, a clear and trustworthy message regarding the claims of the green product is needed. Last but not least, the company should take into consideration students’ price sensitiveness, which differs from other consumers; and adapt, if needed for the product, to the gender of the potential consumer.
List of references

Articles


Books


Booklets & Handbooks


**Websites sources**

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http://www.greenmarketing.com/


**Other sources**

Appendices

A. Questionnaire

Hello,

I am an Erasmus Student in Sweden and I have to write my Bachelor Thesis this semester. This thesis, which is about Green Marketing, also involves doing a survey. I don’t have much time left for writing my thesis and really need the most respondents. It will probably take you just 5 minutes and I would be very grateful if you can answer and submit the questionnaire.

Thank's
Maxime Heutz

*Required

1. * What do you understand under "Green Marketing"?
   (Give a small definition in max 2 lines)

2. * How serious are these environmental problems in your opinion?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Environmental Problem</th>
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<th>-1</th>
<th>+1</th>
<th>Very Important +2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vanishing species</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overflowing landfills</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air pollution</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rain forest destruction</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Water pollution</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy depletion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global warming</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. * To what extent do you agree with these assertions about environmental protection?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree -2</th>
<th>-1</th>
<th>+1</th>
<th>Strongly agree +2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More environmental protection actions are needed and it is essential to promote green living</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental protection is a key concern but I am not ready to make any changes in my living habits</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental protection actions are simply a waste of time, money and resources</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental protection issues are none of my business</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. * How often do you buy environmental-friendly, “green” or eco-labelled products?

- Always
- Often
- Seldom
- Never

5. * Why do you buy or not buy such green products?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree -2</th>
<th>-1</th>
<th>+1</th>
<th>Strongly agree +2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I think it helps and is good for the environment</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I think it is better quality in comparison with other non green products</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I buy them because these products are healthier</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. * Do you take environmental considerations into account when buying a product?

- □ Always
- □ Often
- □ Seldom
- □ Never

7. * How important are for you following criteria when buying an environmentally-friendly ("green") product?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Unimportant -2</th>
<th>-1</th>
<th>+1</th>
<th>Very Important +2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The “green” ingredients of the product</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The “green” marketing process (from development to distribution) of the product</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The label of the product</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The company’s environmental reputation</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The price of the &quot;green&quot; product</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8. * Up to how much more are you prepared to pay for environmentally friendly or “green” products?

- 0%
- 1% - 10%
- 11% - 20%
- 21% - 30%
- 31% - 40%
- 41% - 50%
- > 50%

9. * Could you name any eco-labels?

10. * Trust in firms’ claiming green marketing practises

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>-2</th>
<th>-1</th>
<th>+1</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>+2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Do you usually trust firms’ claiming green marketing practises?

11. * Do you try to get information about the environmental soundness of various products or firms?

- Always
- Often
- Seldom
- Never

12. If so, do you use the Web to get this information?

- Always
- Often
- Seldom
- Never
13. * Environmental concern

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>-2</th>
<th>-1</th>
<th>+1</th>
<th>Strong +2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you think you have environmental concern?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14. * To what extent do you agree with following assertions?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>-2</th>
<th>-1</th>
<th>+1</th>
<th>Strongly agree +2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am a major green purchaser and recycler</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will buy or give green, but won’t make lifestyle changes</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I care but would only spend a little more to buy green.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I see the environment as a problem, but somebody else’s problem</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t really care about environment</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15. * Gender?

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

16. * Year of birth? [ ]

17. * Nationality? [ ]

18. If coming from Belgium, which is your native language?

- ☐ Flemish
- ☐ French
- ☐ German
19. * In which country are you studying? (Sweden, Belgium, etc.)

20. * Field of studies?

- Agriculture, veterinary sciences and related subjects
- Architecture, building & planning
- Biological sciences
- Business sciences, business engineering and administrative studies
- Computer science / IT
- Creative arts and design
- Economics
- Education / teaching
- Engineering and technology
- Geography and environmental sciences
- Historical / philosophical studies
- Languages, literature, classics
- Law
- Mass communications and documentation
- Mathematical sciences
- Medicine, dentistry and related subjects
- Music studies and related subjects
- Politics
- Psychology
- Social studies
- Sports sciences
- Tourism studies
- Other:

21. * What type of course are you currently studying?

- Undergraduate (Bachelor)
- Masters
- Doctorate / PhD
- Other:
22. Do you have a job (student job, own firm, etc.) besides your studies?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

23. If so, what is roughly/approximately your monthly disposable income in €?

- ☐ 0€
- ☐ 1€ - 100€
- ☐ 101€ - 300€
- ☐ 301€ - 500€
- ☐ 501€ - 1000€
- ☐ 1001€ - 2000€
- ☐ > 2000€
B. Figures

Figure 1: Green marketing process model

Source: adapted from Peattie, K. (1992), p.104
Figure 2: The three Regions in Belgium

The Flemish Region and the Walloon region comprise each 5 provinces whereas the Brussels-Capital Region comprises 19 municipalities that do not belong to a province.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Walloon Region</th>
<th>Flemish Region</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Walloon Brabant (Wavre)</td>
<td>Antwerp (Antwerp)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hainaut (Mons)</td>
<td>Limburg (Hasselt)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liège (Liège)</td>
<td>Flemish Brabant (Leuven)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg (Arlon)</td>
<td>East Flanders (Ghent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Namur (Namur)</td>
<td>West Flanders (Bruges)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3: The three communities in Belgium

Source from "Portail de la Communauté Française" http://www.cfwb.be/

Figures 4 and 5: General information – Gender and Nationality of population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Nationality of population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male 44.82%</td>
<td>Swedes 56.06%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female 55.18%</td>
<td>Others 14.31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Belgians 29.64%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 6: General information – Student’s profile

![Student’s profile chart]

Figure 7: General information – Monthly income

![Monthly income chart]
Figure 8: General information - Field of studies

- Agriculture, veterinary sciences and related subjects: 4 (1%)
- Architecture, building & planning: 4 (1%)
- Biological sciences: 13 (2%)
- Business sciences, business engineering and administrative studies: 99 (14%)
- Computer science / IT: 51 (7%)
- Creative arts and design: 9 (1%)
- Economics: 75 (11%)
- Education / teaching: 51 (7%)
- Engineering and technology: 53 (8%)
- Geography and environmental sciences: 14 (2%)
- Historical / philosophical studies: 5 (1%)
- Languages, literature, classics: 15 (2%)
- Law: 4 (1%)
- Mass communications and documentation: 17 (2%)
- Mathematical sciences: 6 (1%)
- Medicine, dentistry and related subjects: 47 (7%)
- Music studies and related subjects: 9 (1%)
- Politics: 15 (2%)
- Psychology: 35 (5%)
- Social studies: 88 (13%)
- Sports sciences: 10 (1%)
- Tourism studies: 10 (1%)
- Other: 52 (8%)
Figures 9, 10, 11 and 12: General information for Belgium

Native language of Belgian population

French 71.43%
German 16.75%
Flemish 11.82%

Figure 9

Gender

Male 49.75%
Female 50.25%

Figure 10

Student’s profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate (Bachelor)</td>
<td>58.62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>36.95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate / PhD</td>
<td>3.45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0.99%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 11

Monthly income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Range</th>
<th>People</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 2000 €</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1001 € - 2000 €</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>501 € - 1000 €</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>301 € - 500 €</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101-300 €</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 € - 100 €</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 €</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 12
Figures 13, 14 and 15: General information for Sweden

Figure 13

Gender

- Male: 39.06%
- Female: 60.94%

Figure 14

Student’s profile

- Undergraduate (Bachelor): 75.00%
- Masters: 17.71%
- Doctorate / PhD: 7.03%
- Other: 0.26%

Figure 15

Monthly income

- >2000€: 15 people
- 1001€ - 2000€: 24 people
- 501€ - 1000€: 73 people
- 301€ - 500€: 31 people
- 101-300€: 62 people
- 1€-100€: 58 people
- 0€: 121 people
**C. Tables**

Key differences between Feminine and Masculine Societies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Norm and Family</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Feminine</strong></td>
<td><strong>Masculine</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationships and quality of life are important.</td>
<td>Challenge, earnings, recognition, and advancement are important.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both men and women should be modest.</td>
<td>Men should be assertive, ambitious, and thought.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both men and women can be tender and focus on relationships.</td>
<td>Women are supposed to be tender and take care of the relationships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the family both fathers and mothers deal with facts and feelings.</td>
<td>In the family fathers deals with facts and mothers with feelings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both boys and girls are allowed to cry, but neither should fight.</td>
<td>Girls cry, boys don’t; boys should fight back, girls shouldn’t fight at all.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys and girls play for the same reasons.</td>
<td>Boys play to compete, girls to be together.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridegrooms and brides are held to the same standards.</td>
<td>Brides need to be chaste and industrious, grooms don’t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husbands should be like boyfriends</td>
<td>Husbands should be healthy, wealthy, and understanding, and boyfriends should be fun.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: adapted from Hofstede G. and Hofstede G. J. (2004), p. 132

Gender and Sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Feminine</strong></th>
<th><strong>Masculine</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Being responsible, decisive, ambitious, caring; and gentle is for women and men alike.</td>
<td>Being responsible, decisive, ambitious is for men; being caring and gentle is for women.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls don’t cheer for boys.</td>
<td>Women’s ambition is channelled towards men’s success.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s liberation means that men and women take equal shares both at home and at work.</td>
<td>Women’s liberation means that women are admitted to positions so far occupied by men.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single standards: both sexes are subjects.</td>
<td>Double standards: men are subjects, women objects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same norm for showing male or female nudity.</td>
<td>Stronger taboo on showing male than female</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Explicit discussion of sex, less implicit symbolism.  
Sex is a way for two persons to relate.  
Sexual harassment is a minor issue.  
Homosexuality is considered a fact of life.

nudity.  
Taboo on explicit discussion of sex but implicit erotic symbolism.  
Performance for a men can be exploitation for a woman  
Sexual harassment is a big issue.  
Homosexuality is considered a threat to society.

Source: adapted from Hofstede G. and Hofstede G. J. (2004), p. 136

### Education and Consumer Behaviour

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feminine</th>
<th>Masculine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average student is the norm; praise for week students.</td>
<td>Best student is the norm, praise for excellent students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jealousy of those who try to excel.</td>
<td>Competition in class; trying to excel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failing in school is a minor incident.</td>
<td>Failing in school is a disaster.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competitive sports are extracurricular.</td>
<td>Competitive sports are parts of the curriculum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children are socialized to be nonaggressive.</td>
<td>Aggression by children is accepted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendliness in teachers is appreciated.</td>
<td>Brilliance in teachers is admired.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job choice is based on intrinsic interest.</td>
<td>Job choice is based on career opportunities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men and women partly study the same subjects.</td>
<td>Men and women study different subjects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women and men teach young children.</td>
<td>Women teach young children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women and men shop for food and cars.</td>
<td>Women shop for food, men for cars.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Couples share one car.</td>
<td>Couples need two cars.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More products for the home are sold.</td>
<td>More status products are sold.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More fiction is read (rapport talk).</td>
<td>More nonfiction is read (rapport talk).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: adapted from Hofstede G. and Hofstede G. J. (2004), p. 142