Mental illness is a global problem that causes much suffering not just for the individual but also for his/her relatives and friends. It is children and adolescents that are most affected and especially young women. Untreated mental health problem impede an adolescents development as a physical, psychological and/ or social individual. The most common mental health problem among adolescents is depression. Early recognition and intervention of depression is crucial in order to get a successful and long-lasting recovery. Previous research has shown that there are cultural differences in adolescents’ mental health. Thus the overall aim of this thesis was to investigate the factors that are associated with depressive symptoms among adolescents living in the Kvarken region.

This is a cross-sectional study. The data was collected by means of a self-report questionnaire investigating the adolescents' life and health. The target population consists of 17-19-year-olds about to transit to adulthood and who live in Västerbotten (Sweden) and in Österbotten (Finland). They attend the third year of secondary academic or vocational tracks. The total sample consists of 386 adolescents.

Items relating to all of the investigated domains were associated with depressive symptoms, i.e. demographic, health, relationship, identity, education, daily problems and future orientation factors, i.e. adolescents’ suffering is expressed in various shapes (e.g. problems in school and low self-esteem). The results indicate that a suffering expressed as somatic symptoms of depression are connected to all parts of an adolescents life.