



Contribution from Kirchheim



Tourism -Impact and Opportunities for Rural Development (Hans Hartl / Margareth Lardschneider McLean)

A. General impact of tourism

Tourism has an impact on the different aspects of social life:

Family, Social Topics		Economy
	TOURISM	
Culture, Art		Environment

Each strand is effected by Tourism and influences Tourism too:
we talk about the **reciprocity** of each aspect on each other.
The most important task for people is to maintain a **balance**.

Let's look at them individually:

1. Tourism and Family, Social Topics

- development of „family guidelines" -the vision of family life
- provision of family-friendly conditions
- support of the young (home-working, exposure to other cultures, languages. ..)
- interaction of generations

2. Tourism and Economy

- providing favorable conditions for small enterprises (handcrafts, business, agriculture...)
- motivation and care of enterprises

3. Arts and Culture

- support social organisations (most of the people in a village in Austria are involved in non-profit organisations)
- make arts and culture accessible
- arts and culture as pioneers for economic rural development (typical products of the area are interesting for tourists)

4. Environment

- ecological environment (research into climatic impact tends to be underdeveloped in the tourism area)
- social environment (the way people relate to their surroundings)
- economic environment
- cultural environment

B. Example: Waterpark: ..Therme Geinberg". Austria

(www.therme-geinberg.at)

A few years ago, people started looking for **oil** in Upper Austria, in the surroundings of Kirchheim/ Innviertel, instead, they found **hot water: a thermal spring**. What should they do with the **opportunity?** A new project was born: a waterpark, even though nobody really believed in it... This region of Upper Austria was not known for its tourist attractions and the start wasn't easy. Now the project includes ca. 1.200 m2 of indoor and outdoor pools and lots of activities and facilities and involves **14 communities in the region, Kirchheim included.**

Overnight guests: **1999:** 48.000 **2002:** 195.000

Impact of the ..Therme Geinberg" on the small communities involved in the project:

- 1. Family, social topics: sports and social activities, 250 jobs, merger of 14 communities in the region
- 2. Economy: hotels and restaurants, fitness and well-being facilities, sports activities
- 3 Arts and culture: exhibitions, concerts, meetings
- 4. Environment: "soft" tourism (biking, hiking, natural resources like water...), sales of organic farm products

Tourism is a fairly new phenomenon in the region, and the focus is on **good tourism** and **balance** between tourism and the different aspects of rural life. This means we have to **ensure** that the **heritage and environment** of the villages **does not disintegrate** under the influx of new visitors. We think the Therme Geinberg is a good opportunity for the region and for our community of Kirchheim.