What is the purpose of this guide?

- To allow rural players to evaluate the touristic potential of their territory by taking into account supply, demand, competition and market trends.
- To facilitate the choice of suitable methods throughout the evaluation process.
- To help rural players, if necessary, in the selection and monitoring of external experts used during the process.
- To define the basis for a tourism development strategy stemming from cooperation and dialogue between the population and the various local players concerned.

LEADER II

Evaluating a territory's touristic potential

LIAISON ENTRE ACTIONS
DE DÉVELOPPEMENT
DE L'ÉCONOMIE RURALE

LINKS BETWEEN ACTIONS
FOR THE DEVELOPMENT
OF THE RURAL ECONOMY

OBSERVATOIRE
EUROPÉEN LEADER

LEADER EUROPEAN
OBSERVATORY

How to use the guide

This guide is aimed primarily at local action groups, in particular **new LEADER II groups** and their local partners.

Its principal aim is to enable these groups to carry out **their own evaluation** of touristic potential, taking into account supply, demand, competition and market trends. This will also enable them to decide on the particular territory in which the tourism development project will be implemented. **This territory may cover the whole or part of the LEADER area, or even bordering areas.** In the latter case, cooperation between local action groups will be essential (*).

This does not mean doing without **external expertise** altogether: this may be necessary when, for example, large-scale market research is to be carried out, which is an operation requiring the more "technical" approach of specialized consultants.

Thus **diagnosis**, the final phase of the evaluation stage, will have to be carried out **collectively between local players and external experts**.

What is important is that **the tourism strategy which is subsequently chosen stems from cooperation and dialogue** between the population, local players and external consultants.

This guide, which is a **"vade-mecum"** of the evaluation of local touristic potential, takes the form of 21 factsheets, which describe:

> the various stages of the process to be followed **(factsheet 1)**;

> analysis of local touristic supply **(factsheet 2)**;

> analysis of touristic demand **(factsheet 3)**;

> analysis of competition **(factsheet 4)**;

> analysis of market trends **(factsheet 5)**;

> diagnosis of touristic potential (analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the territory set against opportunities and risks) **(factsheet 6)**;

> a number of methods borrowed mainly from the marketing approach **(factsheet 7)**, a veritable "tool box" for evaluation:

> desk research **(factsheet 8)**,

> field research **(factsheet 9)**,

> coordination of a discussion group **(factsheet 10)**;

> a number of practical tools ("checklists" for the inventory of supply, questionnaires, etc..) making the evaluation easier to carry out **(factsheets 13 to 21)**.

Two case studies complete the set: the evaluations of touristic potential carried out in the **West Cork** LEADER areas in Ireland **(factsheet 11)** and **Natur- und Lebensraum Rhön** in Germany **(factsheet 12)** will give users of the guide a better understanding of the approach.

(*) The term "territory" is always used in this guide with reference to this relevant level of tourism project implementation.

Evaluating a territory's touristic potential

Tourism can be **a lever for the local development** of a large number of rural areas. As a sector in full expansion, it boosts traditional economic activities and exploits local cultural specialities to good effect, whilst providing employment opportunities for local young people, thus curbing the rural exodus.

However, tourism is not a panacea for all development problems, and besides, not all rural areas are suited to it. **It would be wrong to view this sector as the only possible alternative to agriculture or some other local economic activity in difficulty.**

Only a **full evaluation**, taking account of **supply, demand, competition and market trends**, can confirm whether a territory really has a **tourism development potential** which justifies investment.

As well as shedding light on the touristic potential of a territory, this evaluation also makes it possible to overcome considerable handicaps and avoid a number of mistakes. For example:

> miscalculation of local touristic potential can lead to project oversizing, with adverse effects on the environment (pollution, deterioration of natural habitats, etc.), culture (loss or "folklorisation" of local identity, etc.), the territory's economic activity (dependency, rise in the cost of living, municipal debt, etc.);

> misperception of the characteristics and specific features of a territory makes it hard to develop an original local touristic supply to stand out from that of comparable competing regions;

> failure to appreciate customer characteristics and market trends compromises the development of tourist products suited to demand.

While it cannot provide totally accurate information on the actual development prospects for the sector, precise evaluation of a territory's touristic potential is an excellent decision-making basis for development bodies, enabling them **to minimize the risks of entering into bad investments.**

*This document was produced by **Peter Zimmer** and **Simone Grassmann** [*], in cooperation with **Yves Champetier, Catherine de Borchgrave, Andrea Hildwein-Scheele** and **Jean-Luc Janot**, following the LEADER seminar on this topic in Sierra de Gata (Extremadura, Spain) from 10 to 13 January 1996.*

*[*] **Peter Zimmer**, director of FUTOUR Umwelt- und Tourismus- und Regionalberatung GmbH & CoKG, has been working in the tourism sector for many years. A member of the "Environnement" subcommittee of the Deutscher Reisebüro-Verband (German Federation of Travel Agents), he is also responsible for courses in Tourism at Munich Technical High School and coordinator of the "Rural tourism" group within the LEADER European Observatory.*

*A consultant at FUTOUR, **Simone Grassmann** specializes in rural tourism, her principal activities being advising, training and the production of tourist guides involving the local population.*

THE SUCCESSFUL EVALUATION OF LOCAL TOURISTIC POTENTIAL

There are two main phases in the evaluation of local touristic potential:

> **analysis of the current tourism situation**, covering supply, demand, competition and market trends;

> **diagnosis**, which by comparing the results of the situation analysis, will make it possible to identify a territory's strengths and weaknesses, determine both potential and risks and, finally, decide upon the expediency of developing tourism in the area.

These two phases involve gathering, processing and using internal and external information.
The **marketing approach** provides a whole range of methods for carrying out this work.

ANALYSIS OF THE SITUATION

The first step of evaluation is to produce an **"inventory"** of the local tourism sector: **supply, demand, competition and trends** (e.g. consumer expectations).

Analysis of supply should, in particular, take into account:

> organization of touristic activity,

> the marketing of tourism,

> initial and on-going training in the field of tourism,

> existing cooperation and potential partners,

> the support mechanisms available.

It is also very useful to identify **certain economic indicators** for the territory concerned: the **overall turnover** of the local tourism sector, the **value added** created by this activity and the number of **jobs** linked to tourism.

These quantified parameters, updated each year, also provide those responsible locally with key elements to guide their tourism development strategy.

Although this **internal** information is already enough to identify a territory's strengths and weaknesses, it is equally necessary to compile a table of **external general conditions**: local tourism operators should be able to access information on the market situation as a whole, in particular **demand** and **competition**. The foreseeable development of short and medium term **trends** also affects the development of tourism.

DIAGNOSIS

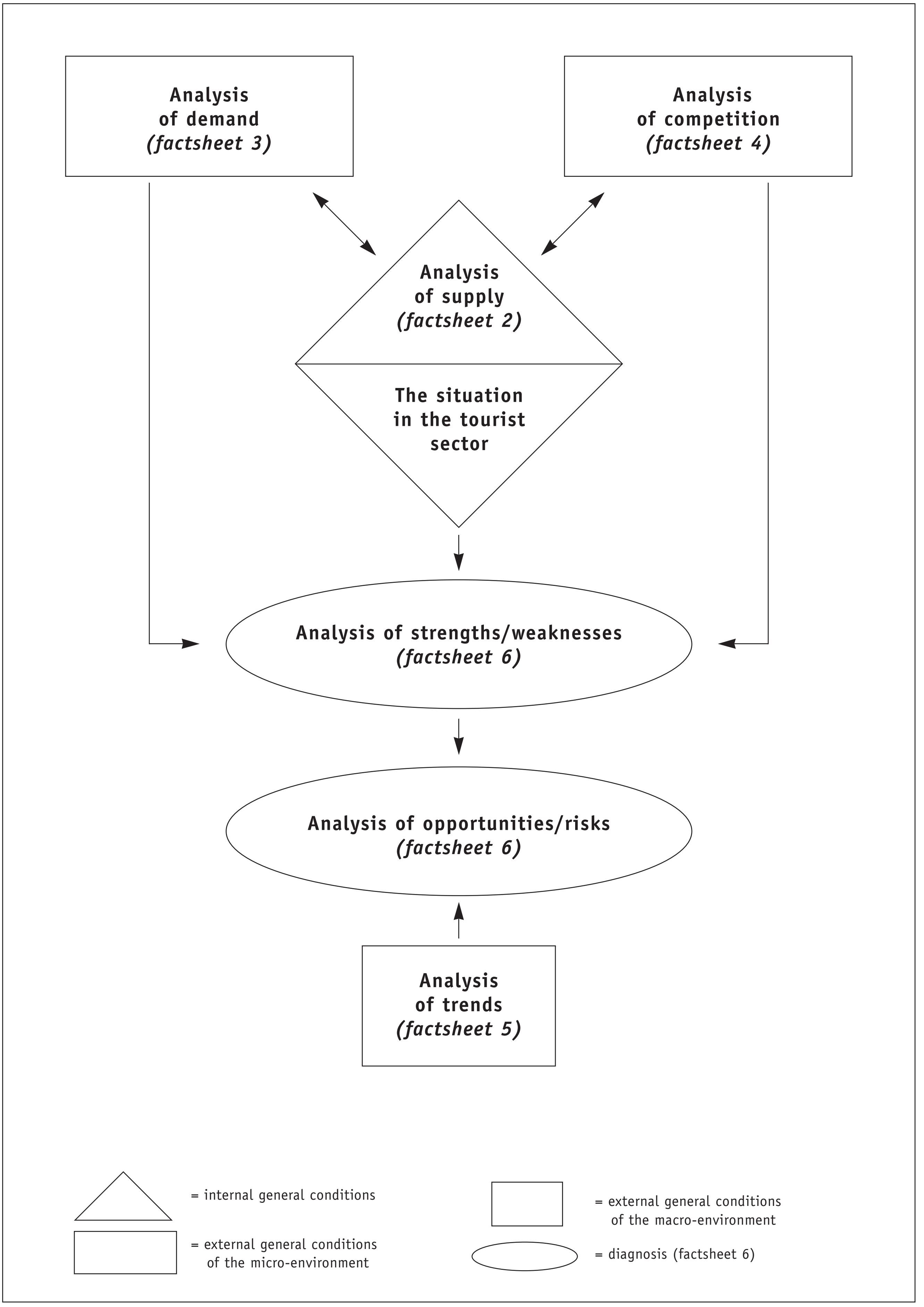
Comparison of the analyses of supply, demand, competition and trends will identify a territory's **strengths and weaknesses**.

Through the first stage of the diagnosis, it is possible to determine **the opportunities and risks** associated with any development of tourism.

The last stage of the diagnosis – comparing the territory's strengths and weaknesses with the opportunities and risks of its tourism sector on the market – enables a **"successful strategic position"** to be defined. This concept covers the main assets likely to lead in the long term to superiority over competitors.

Another equally important point is to determine whether the territory has a **"unique selling position" (USP)**, an exceptional selling point (e.g. a unique site) which provides the territory with an **absolute comparative advantage** recognized by the client.

FACTSHEET 1 - EVALUATION OF LOCAL TOURISTIC POTENTIAL



FACTSHEET 2 - ANALYSIS OF SUPPLY

KEY ELEMENTS

Analysis of local touristic supply must first of all include an inventory of the following:

Natural factors:
> geographical situation and size of territory
> geological situation and climate
> water (sea, rivers, lakes, etc.)
> landscapes, fauna and flora

Socio-economic factors:
> economic structure (importance of the various sectors of activity, etc.)
> socio-demographic structure (population pyramid, migratory balance, socio-professional distribution, etc.)
> political and administrative structure

Infrastructure and services available:
> facilities (water, gas, electricity, waste processing, etc.)
> transport (road and railway networks, public transport, etc.)
> services (commercial, health services, etc.)

Cultural factors:
> history
> traditions / local craft products
> layout of sites
> monuments and sites of interest
> places to visit, guided tours
> entertainment, cultural events, etc.

Supply: sport and leisure
> water sports, swimming
> aviation
> horse-riding
> walks and bicycle tourism
> winter sports
> golf, bowls
> other sporting and leisure activities

Supply: health and cures
> balneology, cures, healthcare, keep fit, revitalisation,
> various therapies, etc.

Supply: accommodation
> overall capacity
> breakdown of the supply of beds and accommodation according to size
> breakdown of the supply of beds and accommodation according to type
> local distribution of accommodation
> quality and rates of board
> possibility of farming holidays, rural gîtes
> camp-sites, caravanning
> development of the supply of accommodation

Supply: catering
> overall capacity
> local distribution of restaurants
> quality and prices

Possibilities for organizing conferences and seminars
> conference centres and exhibition halls
> hotels providing rooms for seminars and necessary technical facilities

N.B.

Given the key importance of gathering and using the data necessary for this inventory, it is recommended that "systematic checklists" be used ***(see factsheets 13 to 18).***

However, from the **point of view of local development** based on tourism, analysis of supply must not only consider these elements but also take into account the following factors:

Local population:
> Is the population aware of tourism?
> What are its expectations?
> How can it contribute to its development?
> Does a tourism development plan already exist?
> Which people could take a lead and get initial projects off the ground?
> What are the opinion "makers" and "multipliers"?

Local tourist organizations
> Which tourist organizations are already active locally?
> What are their competences and fields of activity?
> Who works there? What is their role?
> What is their budget?
> What are the possibilities of working together with these organizations?
> What activities are planned?

Touristic marketing
> What is the policy on supply and prices?
> What distribution channels are used?
> What communication instruments are used (advertising, public relations, sales)? What are their qualities and shortcomings?
> What marketing strategies are envisaged?

Training in tourism
> What level of qualification do people working in tourism have?
> What are the deficits as regards training?
> What are the possibilities of vocational, initial and on-going training at local and regional levels?
> What training programmes would be necessary but are not available locally?

Cooperation between local tourism operators
> What cooperation already exists at local level (regular meetings between hotel owners, adaptation of restaurant opening hours, etc)?
> Which potential partners are ready to cooperate in the area concerned?
> What projects already exist? Is there scope for synergy?

Support, aid, competitions
> What kind of support is available for players in the tourist economy?
> Are there any competitions in the field of tourism in which it could be interesting to participate?

METHODS FOR ANALYZING SUPPLY

Analysis of supply requires both desk and field research (consultation of people-resources, site visits, etc.).

Having pinpointed the **relevant territory** to be studied, information can be gathered for each commune until the essential data for the whole territory is available.

Results will be presented not only in the form of texts or tables but also in the form of graphs so that they can be read more easily.

A map with symbols clearly indicating sites, accommodation and tourist facilities available in a territory will provide a clear picture of that territory's touristic supply.

In order to analyze supply, cooperation with universities and schools of higher education often proves useful for both parties.

Example:

*In Spain, the **Sierra de Gata** LEADER group and the University of Extremadura gathered the key statistics on touristic supply in Sierra de Gata. This led to the creation of a database containing 2000 keywords.*

***Contact:** Sierra de Gata LEADER,*
C/Mayor 3, E-10850 Hoyos.
Tel.: 34 27 51 41 10; Fax: 34 27 51 41 10.

It is also important to monitor the **territory's image** – another key supply factor.

For this purpose, certain very simple methods are sufficient: **regular consultation of the daily press, specialized reviews, the various media, etc.** provides information on the evolution of public opinion and makes it possible to anticipate trends and use the information thus obtained for public relations.

FACTSHEET 3 - ANALYSIS OF DEMAND

KEY ELEMENTS

Analysis of demand should provide answers to certain **quantitative questions** relating to the current situation: How many clients are there? Which touristic products have they consumed? Where did they stay (establishment/location)? For how long (length of each person's stay)? When (season)? How much money did they spend locally?

It also is important to gather **qualitative information:** What types of client (target groups) came? Where did they come from? What were their expectations, motivations, etc.? What did they particularly like? What did they like less?

It should be noted that although it is relatively easy to obtain quantitative data, provided local tourism statistics are available, qualitative information can only be gathered from a field study (with clients).

QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

A distinction needs to be made between **"tourists"** (customers staying for at least one night) and **"daytrippers".**

With regard to the first, both their number **(arrivals)** and the number of **nights** is recorded. By dividing these figures, the **average length of stay** can be calculated:

$$\frac{\textit{number of nights}}{\textit{number of arrivals}} = \textit{average length of stay}$$

The distribution of nights and arrivals over the year makes it possible to determine the high and low **seasons** and to know at what moment supply and marketing need to be improved so that tourist establishments and facilities can be used for as long as possible throughout the year.

These figures should be compared for a **longer period** to observe the way in which the local tourism sector is developing.

Identifying the geographical distribution of demand in the area is an additional aid and provides information on the most visited places and on those visited only by a few people.

The distribution of nights and arrivals between the various **modes of accommodation** (hotels, camp-sites, gîtes, guest rooms, etc) will have to be determined at the same time.

Example:

*Each year, the **Hindelang** commune (Bavaria) in Germany publishes important information on touristic demand. Comparison of this information with the previous year gives a clear picture of the sector's development. In addition to the number of arrivals and nights, the report also gives an idea of occupancy rates for each mode of accommodation (private, rental, hotels, etc.). Monthly statistics provide information on seasonal fluctuations. Comparative application of these data indicates tourist distribution between the six Hindelang districts. Annual statistics published by the town's hydropathic administration also provide information on the visitors' place of origin and age.*

***Contact:** Kurverwaltung Hindelang,*
Markstraße 9, D-87541 Hindelang
Tel.: 49 83 24 89 20; Fax: 49 83 24 80 55.

QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

Qualitative information can only be obtained through **direct interviewing of clients (see factsheet 9),** which also allows information to be gathered on daytrippers. The latter are more difficult to study since, as they do not spend the night at the location, they are not recorded in their place of lodging.

A questionnaire is drawn up on the basis of the information required. It may, for example, include questions on the following:

> time of year journey made;
> length of journey;
> purpose of journey;
> type of journey (accompanied? unaccompanied?);
> means of transport;
> type of accommodation;
> activities during the holiday;
> motivations, expectations, degree of satisfaction;
> the area's reputation;
> choice of holiday location;
> holiday expenditure;
> frequency of holidays taken in the past and future holiday intentions;
> statistical data (age, sex, level of education, profession, income, usual place of residence).

The processing of these data facilitates the development of touristic products meeting the expectations of different target groups.

These data are also necessary if an effective promotion campaign is to be launched (targeted strategy, choice of media supports, etc).

METHODS FOR ANALYZING DEMAND

Analysis of local touristic demand requires desk research (in particular the study of existing statistics on overnight stays) and regular field research (in the form of oral, written or telephone surveys of clients). Together this provides the relevant information.

The questionnaire should be drafted and the method chosen with help from experts - at least the first time.

Factsheet 19 shows a model questionnaire for customers.

> ***N.B.***
>
> *In the case of a written survey, it is important that the questionnaire is not too long in order not to put off the person being interviewed, who would be likely to fill it in leaving gaps or incorrectly, or may even not return it. To obtain the largest possible number of responses, the survey can be tied to a competition in which it is possible to win, for example, a free stay in the area.*

There are also **other smaller-scale possibilities** which, however, do not always give sufficiently representative results.

- **Customers' registration forms**, available from people offering accommodation, can provide useful information: beside socio-demographic information (where a person comes from, their age, sex, etc.), these forms often also contain a number of qualitative questions (means of transport used, number of people travelling, etc.). Their (computerized) processing provides invaluable data on customer characteristics, on where they come from and on the means of transport used. **Factsheet 20 gives an example of a registration form which can be used for analysis.**
- It is possible to identify where visitors come from by their **vehicle registration plates**. This information can be obtained, for example, at restaurant and leisure centre car parks or near to the most frequented sites. At the same time, questions can be put to vehicle occupants (age, sex, number of children, etc.).

Example:

*In the **West Cork** LEADER area (Ireland), all cars registered outside the county were recorded. Their occupants were also interviewed using a short questionnaire.*

Contact: *West Cork LEADER Cooperative,*
Shinagh House, Bandon, IRL-Co.Cork.
Tel.: +353 23 41 271; Fax: +353 23 41 304.

- The regular organization of **round table discussions with participants chosen from among customers** can provide certain qualitative information on visitors' characteristics and expectations ***(see factsheet 10)***. However, this method should only be regarded as a complement to other surveys, if subjective and erroneous interpretations are to be avoided.
- **Individual surveys of customers** can be carried out provided they are not too time-consuming. It should be noted that help can often be obtained with regard to the methodology and realization of this type of survey through cooperation with a university or a higher education establishment.

Example:

*In the United Kingdom, the **West Cornwall** LEADER group (England) instructed a student with the European High School (France) to carry out a survey to determine the direct impact of tourism on the local economy. This involved finding out how visitors spent their money and to what extent local companies managed to retain this wealth. The survey revealed the visitors' profile, their choice of accommodation and eating, their view of the activities and services available locally, their budget for purchasing souvenirs and gifts, etc. One part of the survey, carried out over two periods of the year (Easter and July 1996), concerned trade in particular. It revealed that since the supply of local products was limited and poorly publicized, only 40% of purchases really benefited the local economy.*

Contact: *Jim Cooper, West Cornwall LEADER Project,*
Rosewarne, Camborne, Cornwall TR14 0AB (UK).
Tel.: +44 1209 716 674; Fax: +44 1209 612 215.

FACTSHEET 4 - ANALYSIS OF COMPETITION

KEY ELEMENTS

Analysis of competition involves gathering and analyzing as much information as possible **on existing and potential competing territories**. This step, which naturally supposes a detailed knowledge of the territory's tourist products, aims to answer the following questions:

> Which are the main competing territories?
> What products do they offer on the market?
> What are their weak points and strong points?
> How can information gathered on competition be used effectively?

It is difficult **to define competitors**, given the diversity and complexity of the products concerned, but in theory, any "holiday destination" can be regarded as a competitor.

The – objective – survey will cover regions offering touristic products similar to those of the territory concerned, as well as bordering or nearby areas, the latter being important competitors insofar as daytrippers are concerned.

Analysis of competition can lead to the following **strategies**:

> Strategy 1: "Imitating the competition"
A competing product, service or concept is entirely reproduced.

Example:

*The "Umweltsiegel Tirol" label, an ecological quality label developed for the Tyrol (Austria) and accompanied by a programme of incentives for Tyrolean hotels, was completely reproduced on the other side of the border in the **Vinschgau/Val Venosta** (Trentino Alto Adige, Italy) LEADER area, both for the selection and control criteria of the label and for communication policy.*

Contact: *Tirol Werbung,*
Bozner Platz 6, A-6020 Innsbruck.
Tel.: +43 51 2 53 20 133; Fax: +43 51 2 53 20 150.

> Strategy 2: "Being inspired by the competition"
A competing product, service, concept or idea is imitated, but reproduced in a different form.

Example:

In Austria, a "Natur und Leben Bregenzerwald" cooperation was set up between farmers and restaurant owners in the Bregenz forest in order to increase the use of local agricultural products in the preparation of regional culinary specialities by restaurants. This idea was adopted in other Austrian regions, in a somewhat modified form, but with similar objectives and strategy (indication of the source of the products on restaurant menus, for example). This is the case of Eichsfeld, for instance, with its slogan "pure Eichsfeld".

Contact: *Regio Bregenzerwald,*
A-6863 Egg 873.
Tel.: +43 55 12 22 16 20; Fax: +43 55 12 22 16 29.

> Strategy 3: "Standing out from the competition"
A product, service, concept or idea that the competition did not develop is prioritized.

Example:

The "Rhön Sheep" operation in Hesse (Germany) is the result of this strategy. Since the meat of this sheep is increasingly used by caterers, the future of this old and local race, which was threatened by extinction, has been assured and livestock-farming has once again become profitable. Moreover, since the black-headed Rhön sheep is a veritable "landscape gardener", the animal has become a touristic symbol, an appealing mascot for the whole territory.

Contact: *Verein Natur- und Lebensraum Rhön,*
Georg Meilinger-Str. 3,
D-36115 Ehrenberg-Wüstensachsen.
Tel.: +49 66 83 96 02 0; Fax: +49 66 83 96 02 21.

Each of these strategies has **advantages** and **disadvantages:**

> **strategy 1** makes it possible to avoid innovation costs and reduce the risks of failure, but does not make it possible to stand out from other territories, which means there is no genuine comparative advantage in relation to the competition;
> **strategy 3**, on the other hand, brings real advantages on the market. It creates an exclusiveness which, at the same time, signals the arrival of new products. However, it is clearly an approach which involves high costs and risks of failure;
> **strategy 2** is a compromise displaying certain advantages and disadvantages of the two other approaches.

Analysis of competition does not have to end in rivalry but, on the contrary, should give **a clearer picture of market position.**

Highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of competing territories makes it possible to evaluate better the risks and the potential of one's own territory. This step may even lead to **"cooperation between competitors"**, so that several can occupy a more prominent position on the market.

METHODS FOR ANALYZING COMPETITION

Desk research is generally sufficient to obtain information for analyzing competition.

Principal sources of information can be competitors' publications (tourist reports, various brochures). Their advertising inserts in newspapers, specialized reviews etc. make it possible to identify their promotional strategy, for example (concept, message, slogan, chosen advertising supports, etc.).

Contact with the experts and associations of the sector, visits to tourist fairs or even personal contacts are further ways of gathering other data cheaply.

FACTSHEET 5 - ANALYSIS OF TRENDS

KEY ELEMENTS

The evaluation of a territory´s touristic potential must take account of the development of the general external conditions, in particular **trends affecting consumer behaviour**. This involves anticipating the opportunities and risks associated with the new expectations of the various customers in order to be able to create new tourist products adapted to these developments.

For each new trend identified, the following questions need to be asked:

> what is the effect of this trend on the territory?
> how does it affect competitors?
> is demand shifting towards the strong points of local touristic supply?
> how can people benefit from this development?

It is obviously very difficult to predict future trends accurately, especially in a context of increasing interpenetration of cultures and globalization of markets. Nevertheless, in spite of this, certain general trends can be mentioned which, when taken into account, can facilitate the decision-making process.

As regards tourism, each European country experiences trends which are typical of it. These trends can be identified by consulting the various market studies carried out on a national level ***(see factsheet 8)***. There is, however, a **context common to all countries**:

> the liberalization of air transport, which has brought fares down considerably, has prompted a sharp **increase in the number of journeys made**, but has not made it possible to definitively identify preferences for specific destinations;
> the effects of "fashion" or geopolitical events can have a very important impact on the number of tourists that visit a particular territory;
> within the context of creating international competition and expanding the sector (with the arrival of numerous new operators on the market), an **increase in the number of tourist products** is evident;
> the total abolition of internal border controls within the European Union and the introduction of the single currency are other factors which should make travelling easier;
> however, if demand were to stagnate, competition would become more fierce throughout Europe.

Whatever the case, as far as the general orientation of tourism development policies is concerned, action can generally be expected to be aimed at:

> improving environmental protection;
> the professionalization of or at least better training for tourism operators;
> deseasonalizing the influx of tourists;
> improving transport infrastructure;
> promoting new types of stays;
> improving market research and touristic marketing methods,
> increasing consumer protection (labels, classifying various products, checking prices, etc.);
> generalizing the use of telematic booking systems.

In the same way, local participants within the sector will have to create tourist products combining the comparative advantages of their territory with the present or foreseeable trends in demand:

> over the next 30 years, the number of people over the age of 60 will increase by 50% while the number of people under 20 will fall by 11%. **European population ageing** is significantly increasing the market of elderly tourists;
> interest taken in matters associated with the **environment and health** is continually growing;
> the tendency of consumers is to forsake mass tourism in favour of **more differentiated products.** Those who have been able to identify new openings and react quickly are already reaping the benefits;
> the **"average" consumer**, defined in accordance with specific socio-demographic characteristics, no longer exists;
> the **"new" consumer** is expressing apparently contradictory expectations and choices of travel method (fast-food and last-minute departures go hand in hand with haute cuisine and luxury cruises). This is particularly true of single people and young adults;
> urban clients tend to go away for a shorter period of time but more frequently, hence the **advantage of destinations which are within reach or are easily accessible**;
> the **increase in free time** and the resulting mobility will probably cause an **increase in road traffic**, which contradicts tourist expectations;
> the number of holiday-makers in search of peace and quiet in an **unspoilt environment** will continue to grow.

METHODS FOR ANALYZING TRENDS

For reasons of cost, it is recommended that **use be made primarily of existing studies** since it is unlikely that the financial and human resources are locally available to carry out a large-scale study of trends. Most local action groups can, however, produce their own analyses, which are less ambitious but nevertheless very useful.

For example, a **debate** can be organized bringing together holiday-makers and local people working in tourism as well as a representative sample of the population ***(see factsheet 10)***.

At the first meeting, participants are asked to draw up a list of the points they consider most relevant with regard to:

> trends in society (new ways of life, more "individualistic" behaviour, tastes for healthier food, etc.);
> trends as regards tourism ("nature" holidays, "active" holidays, etc.);
> noticeable changes in the area (increase in local product consumption, more visits to a particular site, etc.).

In order to be more effective, the debate can take the form of a group discussion (with about ten participants at most).

The next stage involves gathering and structuring the comments received during the debate and comparing them with those from other sources (external market research, etc.).

Trends are then classified and evaluated according to their general impact and particular importance for the local environment.

FACTSHEET 6 - DIAGNOSIS OF THE LOCAL TOURISTIC POTENTIAL

Diagnosis, which is the result of evaluating potential, initially involves **comparing the analyses of supply, demand, competition and trends**, with the aim of discovering the territory's **strengths and weaknesses** as well as the **opportunities and risks** of its market.

The final comparison of these two elements (strengths and weaknesses/opportunities and risks) will then make it possible to determine a **"successful strategic position"** for the territory.

DIAGNOSIS OF STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

This first involves carrying out, both rigorously and objectively, a **profile of the strengths and weaknesses** of the local tourism sector.

The information obtained from the analysis of supply can be evaluated by comparing it with the analysis of competition. Strengths and weaknesses are analyzed and classified in order of importance. In this context, the weaknesses of local touristic supply must not be evaded, since they are just as important to know for development purposes as the plus points.

This diagnosis of strengths and weaknesses can be carried out in various manners and from different points of view:

Diagnosis from the customer´s point of view
It is firstly essential to know how **clients** perceive the local touristic supply. To obtain this information, a representative **survey** in which visitors can freely express themselves may, for example, be carried out.

Suggestion boxes placed in various accommodation, tourist offices or any other touristic place can also provide invaluable help: the anonymity of the method means that clients can express their criticisms and suggestions frankly and in writing.

Informal round table talks with clients, run by experienced people, are another means of comparing the perceptions of supply, demand, competition and trends.

> ***N.B.***
>
> *A tourist centre could, for example, invite between six and ten tourists (staying, if possible, in different types of accommodation) to take part in a group discussion every two or three weeks. Customers would thus have the opportunity to express their personal impressions of the area and of the strengths and weaknesses of local tourism and to propose improvements.*
> ***Factsheet 10 provides an outline of the functioning of a discussion group.***

Diagnosis from the point of view of the local population
The organization of **'think tanks'**, which preferably cover many disciplines, or **"open forums"** on tourism give local associations and interested citizens the opportunity to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of their region.
When large numbers of people are involved, this approach enables the population's expectations to be perceived and immediately taken into account. Collectively drawing up the list of a territory´s strengths and weaknesses facilitates the population´s support for the project and creates conditions favourable to the improvement of the tourism situation.
Study trips and other travel between professionals to areas where touristic development has been a success are a very effective means of self-evaluation: field studies and meetings with participants from the sector often allow them to better perceive their own strengths and weaknesses, whilst gathering ideas for improving their territory's touristic supply. These professional missions are generally very informative and often show that there are no "miracle solutions" and that "model" areas also experience failures.

Diagnosis from the experts' point of view
Both local and external experts should take part in the diagnosis: the former "know the terrain" and are able to compare local indicators from one year to the next (number of visitors, occupancy rates, etc.). The external consultants have the advantage of seeing the terrain through fresh eyes; their knowledge of the market enables them to identify the territory´s strengths and weaknesses more objectively. Furthermore, they are often more credible in the eyes of the public authorities and potential fund-raisers, even local ones, who tend to take their evaluation into account.

> ***N.B.***
> *Great care should be taken when choosing an external consultant, and recommendations should be sought. In addition to essential knowledge of the sector, the consultant will need many skills: the ability to listen and coordinate and to write an effective and operational report proposing concrete ideas. The choice of consultant is made after the list of referees is examined. It is also recommended that a call for tenders aimed at a specific target is made and that various proposals are compared.* ***Factsheet 21 is designed to facilitate the choice of consultant.***

Both the **comparison between the actual results and the forecasts** and the **comparison of local indicators with indicators from other areas** also provide important information for evaluating the territory's own strengths and weaknesses.

DIAGNOSIS OF OPPORTUNITIES AND RISKS

Evaluation of opportunities and risks must necessarily take account of existing analyses of competition, demand and trends. Furthermore, it may be necessary to use an external consultant to carry out an initial profile of the opportunities and risks. It is obvious that the process has to be carried out in cooperation with the local population and people responsible.

THE "SUCCESSFUL STRATEGIC POSITION"

By comparing a territory´s strengths and weaknesses with the opportunities and risks of its tourism sector on the market, it is possible to define a **"successful strategic position"** by emphasizing the principal factors and assets likely to gain superiority over competitors in the long run.

As regards tourism, this successful strategic position is due, most of the time, to given (and not created) conditions. It generally corresponds to the existing touristic supply, which is characterized by factors which cannot be changed overnight.

To achieve a successful strategic position, certain openings (e.g. the "hiking holidays" segment) can be targeted and a touristic supply in the form of an **"assembled product"** created and marketed.

In concrete terms, it is no longer possible to approach the tourist market with a slogan of the type "The place to hike"; this must materialize through a set of additional services:

> hiking routes, guided routes or those with character;
> information aids;
> luggage transport services;
> accommodation and restaurants;
> guides, commentaries, visits to sites of touristic interest;
> special passes;
> combined public transport;
> hiking certificates, etc.;
> sporting and leisure activities.

Through the development of such products, the territory may obtain an exceptional sale argument, an absolute comparative advantage ("Unique Selling Position"), for a particular clientele.

Example:

On a cultural theme linked to the "country" or countryside, local operators in Havelland (Brandenburg, Germany) created a tourist product based on the life of the writer Theodor Fontane (1819-1898). The "Fontane-Havelland" combination provides a unique attraction for the territory. It was consequently possible to create an image and base the tourism marketing strategy around the theme "Discovering Havelland in Fontane's footsteps".

This type of link can be expanded and transferred to other segments or categories of supply, each with a different content.

Example of the diagnosis of opportunities and risks for the "Mittlere Rezat" territory in Central Franconia (Bavaria, Germany)

	DIAGNOSIS TOURISTIC MARKETING	DIAGNOSIS NATURAL HERITAGE	DIAGNOSIS TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS
OPPORTUNITIES	> Joint marketing > combined actions/synergy > optimization of financial resources > strengthened marketing > Ecological awareness > Development of the existing supply > Internal marketing > Support of two communes	> Cycling excursions (flat terrain, low rainfall in summer, picturesque small valleys)	> Motorway making it possible to pick up a part of the through traffic thanks to targeted notices (signposts leading up to the exits) > Good road and railway service roads from Nuremberg-Fürth-Erlangen > The promotion of non polluting public transport > Pedestrianized or semi-pedestrianized areas in historical city centres (Heilsbronn, Windsbach) > Harmonized timetables
RISKS	> Lack of coherent and defined marketing > "Two-speed" development and attractiveness of the communes concerned	> Lack of identity (no natural borders) > Not very competitive natural factors (unspectacular landscapes; motorway, high-voltage power lines, industrial estates)	> Noise pollution (from the motorway) making it impossible to market "relaxation breaks" in the area

FACTSHEET 7 - THE METHODS OF THE MARKETING PROCESS APPLIED TO TOURISM

Tourism, a sector which is primarily made up of small enterprises, still uses the methods developed by the marketing process insufficiently, in particular **market research**.

However, **competitive conditions are becoming more and more difficult.**

The tourism market has been transformed from a market of salesmen into a market of purchasers. On the demand side, **consumer behaviour is also changing rapidly**. This change in attitude compels people working in tourism to constantly adapt their supply in the short term to meet the expectations of an increasingly segmented clientele (families, "young" retired people, people in search of adventure, etc.). For this purpose, it is important to have access to relevant information.

Market research must be carried out **before a product is developed** and not once the product is on the market. However, two types of operation are first necessary: **desk research** ***(see factsheet 8)*** and/or **field research** ***(see factsheet 9)*****.**

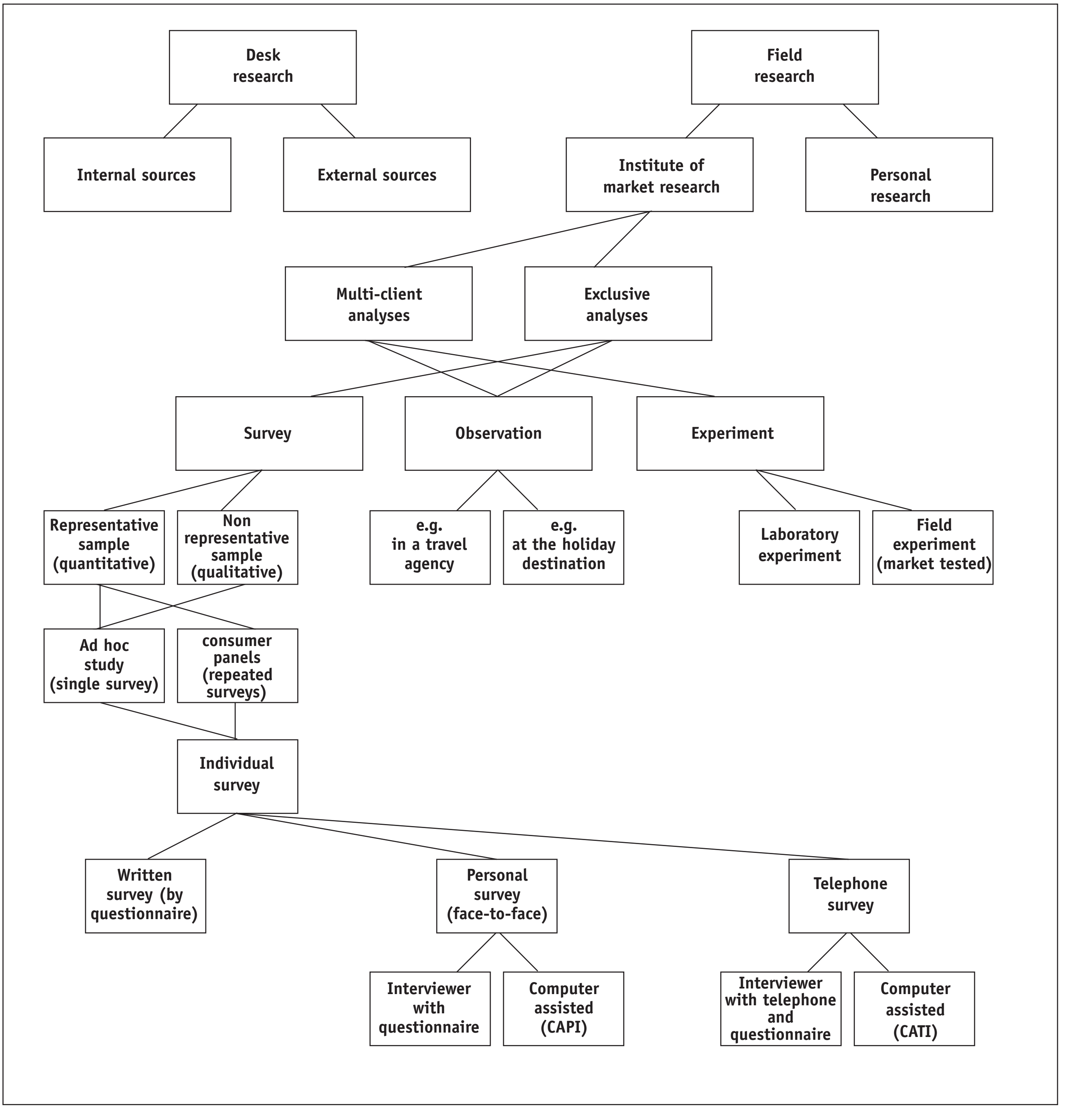
The term "desk research" is used when statistical data or information which already exists, but again was originally created for other uses, is used. **Sources of information** can be either **internal or external.**

The term "field research" is used when information comes from new **surveys** (written, by telephone, etc.), carried out with or without the help of a market research company. In the latter case, this may involve market research for either individual clients or "multi-clients".

N.B.

When only limited financial and human resources are available, which is a common constraint in rural areas, it is preferable to use the desk research method as much as possible, since it is more economical, and to carry out field studies on one's own, but without completely abandoning cooperation with external experts: certain analyses are much more effective and in particular more objective if they are made using outside help.

The marketing process: outline of the methods which can be used to evaluate the touristic potential



The **advantages** of desk research, which uses information that already exists, are evident:

> this method is generally less expensive than a field study;
> the information can be obtained more quickly;
> the examination of existing documentation provides an initial overview of the topic in question;
> the method is a solid base on which to conduct other surveys at a later date;
> desk research can, most of the time, be carried out without having to resort to external experts.

However, this method also has **disadvantages**:

> the information available risks being no longer up to date;
> comparison of the data is relatively complex;
> the information provided is only partially relevant for the specific problem in question;
> the indicators used in the documentation available are often insufficiently detailed to be appropriate for the particular territory being analyzed.

In addition to sources of internal information (local publications, annual reports, etc.) available to local action groups, **external information** is a source of important indicators. Furthermore, such information, if it exists, is essential, since pointless and costly work can thus be avoided.

With regard to tourism, the most important sources of information are, inter alia:

> **ministries of tourism and agriculture;**
> national and regional statistical offices;
> communal archives;
> European studies on consumer behaviour;
> the specialized press;
> the marketing departments of the large press agencies and publishers;
> tourist associations, professional organizations within the sector, trade unions;
> Chambers of Commerce and Industry;
> advertising agencies;
> market research agencies in the field of tourism and leisure;
> **European, national and regional associations involved in rural tourism;**
> data banks linked to the tourist sector;
> Tourism faculties in universities and institutions of higher education which specialize in tourism.

SOME MARKET RESEARCH IN EUROPE

Until now, each European Union country has gone its own way with regard to **European tourism statistics**, but it would be advisable to harmonize methods in order to obtain comparable data.

However, this has already been tried: since 1988, the **"European Travel Monitor"** (ETM) (*) has been continuously analyzing European tourist movement (trips made by adults; breaks of more than one night; independently of the reason for travel).

Every two months, the ETM publishes a report (*) on **"consumer behaviour relating to trips abroad"** in the following 31 countries: Germany, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, Spain, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Norway, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Czech Republic, Romania, United Kingdom, Russia, Sweden, Switzerland, Slovakia, Slovenia and Ukraine.

The report gives a detailed outline of touristic demand in general as well as an overall picture, country by country, of the demand for rural tourism.

Alongside the ETM, numerous other studies exist for each country individually. The table below shows the most important market research carried out in Europe on a regular basis:

(*) Contact:
IPK, Institut für Tourismusmarketing,
Gottfried-Keller-Str. 20,
D-81245 München.
Tel.: +49 89 82 92 37-0;
Fax: +49 89 82 92 37 69.

Market research regularly carried out in various European countries

Country	Heading	Population	Sampling method	Size of sample	Type of survey	Period of survey	Main subject of survey	Periodicity
THE UNITED KINGDOM	British National Travel Survey	population over 16 years of age	random sample	approx. 4000	personal oral interview	November-October	internal trips (at least 4 nights), trips abroad (at least 1 night)	annual
	UK Int. Travel Monitor	travellers	random sample	approx. 175 000	personal oral interview	calendar year	the movements of travellers leaving and entering the United Kingdom	quarterly
	Travel Agents Omnibus Survey	travel agencies throughout GB	survey by quota	approx. 200	personal oral interview	two months	cooperation between travel agencies and those booking the trip	every two months
IRELAND	Holidaytaking by Irish Residents	population over 16 years of age	random sample	3 000	personal oral interview	calendar year	holiday trips (at least 4 nights); short trips (from 1 to 3 nights)	annual
DENMARK	Danish Holiday Analysis	population over 14 years of age	random sample	approx. 4 000	personal oral interview	calendar year	holidays of at least 5 days	every 2 years
SWEDEN	Tourism Leisure	population between 15 and 65 years	random sample	5000 in Spring, 3500 in the Autumn	in writing	October-April, May-September	holidays of at least 5 days short trips (2-4 days)	each year in Spring and Autumn
NORWAY	Ferieundersokelsen	population between 16 and 74 years	random sample at 2 levels	approx. 2 900	personal oral interview	September-August	holidays of at least 5 days short trips (2-4 days)	every 4 years
SPAIN	Las Vacaciones de los E.	population over 16 years of age	random sample	6 700	personal oral interview	October-September	holidays of at least 5 days	irregular
AUSTRIA	Gästebefragung Österreich	tourists in Austria	survey by stratified quota	Summer 6 600, Winter 3 400	in writing	June-September, December-April	behaviour in relation to the trip / behaviour at the holiday location	every 3 years
	Österreich. Reisemonitor	population over 15 years of age	random sample	approx. 1 000	by telephone	once every 2 months	all trips of at least 1 night	every two months
	Austrian Lifestyle Untersuchung	population over 15 years of age	random sample	approx. 4 000	personal oral interview	once every 2 months	behaviour during the last 3 trips	every 2 years
SWITZERLAND	Reisemarkt Schweiz	population between 0 and 79 years	random sample	approx. 5 000	in writing	calendar year	trips of 3 nights or more	every 2 years
ITALY	Ital. Reisemonitor	population between 14 and 79 years	random sample	approx. 2 000 per survey	by telephone	once every 2 months	all trips of at least 1 night	every two months
FRANCE	cyclical survey	population	random sample	approx. 8 000	personal oral interview	October-April, May-September	holidays of at least 5 days	twice a year, in Summer and Winter
LUXEMBOURG	Reiseverhalten Saar-Lor-Lux	population of this region between 18 and 74 years	random sample	approx. 1 500	by telephone	November-October	all holidays	every 2 years
THE NETHERLANDS	Niederl. Tourismusumfrage	population	random sample	5 000	personal oral interview	December-November	all holidays	quarterly
GERMANY	Urlaub und Reisen	population over 14 years of age	random sample	approx. 8 000	personal oral interview	January	holidays / reason for travel	annual
	Deutscher Reisemonitor	population over 14 years of age	random sample	approx. 2 500 per survey	personal oral interview/ CATI	two months	all trips (at least 1 night)	every two months
	Tourist Scope	resident population over 14 years of age	random sample	approx. 4 000 per survey	personal oral interview (CATI)	February/May/ August/November	holidays	from 4 to 6 times a year

Source: Seitz/Meyer 1995; p. 239-240

The choice of sample used for field research is **paramount**: this involves selecting a limited number of people – individuals or groups of people staying in the area – who are representative of the expectations and behaviour of all visitors. The techniques of "random" sampling or, alternatively, sampling "by quotas" generally give reliable results.

Once the method of sampling has been determined, the most appropriate method of analysis can then be chosen. With regard to tourism, one of the methods most often used is the **survey**; each survey technique having specific **advantages and disadvantages**:

> **the telephone survey** is the most rapid method; its cost is relatively low and it can be carried out from a fixed location. However, only a relatively limited number of short and simple questions can be asked with this method. Despite this, major market research companies such as the "European Travel Monitor" ***(see factsheet 8)*** use it;

> **the written survey** does not require any field work. The researcher cannot influence the people interviewed, who are guaranteed anonymity. However, the rate of response to this type of survey is in general extremely low (between 5% and 8%). Certain questions are not understood by people interviewed or cannot be asked. Spontaneous answers must not be used. The deadlines for replying are long and the sample used is very often non-representative;

> **the personal interview** is an interesting solution, at least with regard to complex or large-scale surveys. The sample is guaranteed to be representative. Direct contact with the person being interviewed means that different interviewing techniques can be employed (models, examples, stimulative documents, etc.). The range of questions asked, supported by additional information, can be very broad. In this type of interview it is also possible to ask questions of a more "psychological" nature. Moreover, the person being interviewed can be observed, thus allowing additional information to be obtained on his/her expectations. However, the influence of the interviewer cannot be ruled out. This technique is also more expensive than a written or telephone survey and more time is required for analyzing the results.

In many cases, one survey alone is not sufficient: only by regularly interviewing a group of specific people can reliable information be obtained. These **"panels"** allow a dynamic monitoring of the market since the results are used comparatively.

An **"omnibus"** or **"multi-theme" survey** can also be envisaged; this method is frequently used to gauge a product's reputation. It involves a number of quantitative and in theory representative surveys, where different service providers are jointly able to ask a series of questions. The advantage of this method is that it is less expensive and that this type of standard survey can be monitored quickly and easily by numerous market research companies.

In practice, a whole series of **other techniques, which are inexpensive and can be rapidly put into place, are also necessary.** Of course, these techniques do not claim to replace systematic market research, especially since they are not sufficiently representative, but do nevertheless provide very usable and relevant information at the qualitative level.

> **The group discussion** ***(see factsheet 10)*** is an interesting method which is not particularly expensive and is easy to carry out: an experienced coordinator presents various themes and specific questions to a target group of between six and ten people. Opinions spontaneously expressed give an initial idea of the views, needs, motivations and behaviour of the members of the target group. However, the lack of representativeness of this method, the risk of participants influencing one another and the difficulties associated with using and interpreting the results should all be noted.

> Cooperation with **universities and other institutions of higher education** is also to be envisaged: for example, the "European Campuses of Tourism", co-financed by the European Union, enable students from different countries to voluntarily cooperate in various projects associated with tourism and the protection of the environment.

Example:

In 1995, six European Campuses of Tourism were held in Greece, Spain and France. For example, they enabled students to analyze the natural and cultural potential of the Pantokratora mountains (Corfu), an area which is still relatively untouched by tourism. This analysis is serving as a basis for setting up a regional park for developing tourism for the discovery of nature.

Contact:
CME (Centre Méditerranéen de l'Environnement),
Polynikous 2 GR-174 55 Alimos, Athens;
Tel.: +30 1 93 87 630; Fax: +30 1 93 87 565.

> Cooperation with organizations for young retired people like **"Senior Experts"** (which exists in most European countries) can also prove useful: some of them bring together highly qualified people in various fields, including tourism, and enable them to put their long-acquired experience to good use in return for low remuneration.

> **Interviews with experts** from public organizations or associations, with researchers and other people who specialize in tourism, can also provide very useful information on the local situation of the sector and on the market in general (demand, competition, trends).

> **Cooperation between local action groups** is a particularly interesting method encouraged by LEADER: for example, several LAGs from the same country can link up to jointly carry out market research; LAGs from different countries can join forces to commission a survey of a target group (cyclists, horse-riders, etc.).

FACTSHEET 10 - COORDINATION OF A DISCUSSION GROUP (EXAMPLE)

Time to be allocated: approximately 90 mins

INTRODUCTION

Welcome; introduction by coordinator.

Short presentation of participants (age, profession, marital status, experience of the territory concerned or of other holiday destinations).

GENERAL DISCUSSION *(45 mins)*

Examples of questions to be asked:

1 "What do you like about the area?" "What don't you like or what bothers you?"

2 "What do you think needs to be changed?" "What could be improved?"

3 "What types of visitor does our area most suit?" "What types of visitor does our area less suit?" "Why?" "What do you think of our area and, in your opinion, what could we change?".

Experience shows that this initial set of questions is the most important phase of the discussion: participants can spontaneously express themselves and react to what others say, thereby offering a number of suggestions. Half the time allocated can be devoted to this open discussion.

INDIVIDUAL POINTS

The remainder of the time could be used to discuss more specific issues such as:

4 Regional planning (including transport, walks and hiking routes, "the environment", etc.).

5 Local businesses (from chemists to groceries).

6 Services (public services, doctors, etc.).

7 Accommodation and restaurants.

8 Sports and leisure facilities (including swimming pools, thermal baths, etc.).

9 Local culture, folklore, festivals, markets, etc.

10 The possibility of making excursions from the place of stay (including the organizations available for this (travel agencies, coach drivers, taxis, etc.)).

11 The opportunities and facilities available to specific target groups (young people, families with young children, families with older children, adults without children, elderly people, etc.).

12 The usefulness and availability of tourist information on the territory ("Why did you choose our region?" "Was it recommended to you by word of mouth?" "Did you see it advertised?" "Was it suggested by a tourist office or travel agency?" "What do you think can be improved with regard to tourist information?", etc.).

Source: Seitz/Meyer; 1995; p. 97.

Factsheet 11 - Case study n°1
Evaluation of the touristic potential of West Cork (Ireland)

The local action group for the western area of the county of Cork is one of the few LEADER I groups to have evaluated its territory's touristic potential.

The attraction of West Cork lies primarily in its natural heritage (a very rugged coastline with rare flora and fauna), archaeological sites and historical places of local importance.

Tourism is an important economic sector and already has many ties with other sectors of the local economy (crafts, trade and fishing).

Since the LEADER I programme began in July 1992, the "West Cork LEADER Cooperative" has commissioned a consultant's firm to draw up a plan for the development of tourism in West Cork.

An intermediate report was submitted in October 1992 and the final report entitled "Tourism in West Cork - a Strategy for Growth" was published in January 1993.

The report includes a detailed analysis of the territory's tourist situation and a series of important recommendations for the future of the sector.

The following stages were involved in its drafting:

1. **An analysis of all documentation available on West Cork:**

> socio-economic data (a list of socio-economic advantages, the number of direct and indirect jobs created and the potential revenue linked to tourism in the area, etc.);
> data specific to the tourism sector;
> data concerning infrastructure (identification of the existing and predicted capacities of the local infrastructure, such as the public infrastructure, transport, information and services);
> European programmes;

2. **An inventory of facilities and tourist attractions:**

> places of interest;
> excursion destinations;
> accommodation / restaurants;
> tourist facilities / services;
> transport;
> places to bathe / springs;
> human resources.

3. **An analysis of the natural heritage,** which led this LAG in particular to choose the fuchsia as a symbol of the territory. The increasingly frequent use of the flower in logotype (on tourist signposts and labels for local products) helps to create a strong image for the territory;

4. **A list of participants in the sector.**
   After the lack of coordination and cooperation between operators was revealed, a "tourism committee" (the "West Cork Tourism Council") was created to represent all private and public local tourist organizations;

5. **An examination of the competitive position** of West Cork with regard to the quality of touristic supply. To this end, similar supplies of competing Irish regions have been carefully studied;

6. **A study of forecast trends,** which highlighted:

> the growing interest in "active" holidays;
> the stricter requirements as regards health and the environment;
> the importance of the "Woopies" ("well off older people") target group;

7. **Experts' meetings,** bringing together in particular local tourist operators and opinion leaders. These meetings have made it possible to exchange a considerable amount of information which was taken into account in the development of the long-term strategy;

8. **An analysis of the strengths and weaknesses** of West Cork also gave interesting results. For example:

   Strengths:

> *a rich natural heritage (picturesque and diversified coastline);*
> *a favourable geographical situation (in the centre of tourist areas and the most important places of interest in Ireland, such as Cork, Blarney, Kinsale and Kerry);*
> *a positive image of local food products.*

   Weaknesses:

> *lack of individual image for the territory;*
> *tourist information difficult to access by visitors;*
> *insufficient local public transport.*

9. **An economic survey,** covering employment in the tourism sector (breakdown by field of activity for full- or part-time or permanent or temporary employment).

10. **An analysis of needs,** which detected certain inadequacies between existing supply (both from the qualitative and quantitative point of view) and the current and predicted trends of touristic demand.

11. **An analysis of demand** (where visitors came from, their reasons for travelling to the destination, means of transport used, identification of new target groups) which revealed in particular that 55% of arrivals were between June and August; for 80% of foreign visitors, holidays were the main reason for travel; 36% of visitors used their own car and 27% rented one; the most popular activities were hiking, climbing, cycling, fishing, golf and horse-riding.

This information led to **recommendations** being made on action to be taken:

> sign-posting of the N71 as a tourist route (signs at the exits to all locations along the road);
> production of a regional map indicating places of interest, accommodation, services, etc.;
> participation in the national exhibition "Holidays in Cork, Dublin and Belfast" (90,000 visitors);
> creation of an annual tourism forum bringing together all local actors in the sector.

The **cost** of the operation amounted to ECU 12,571, breaking down as follows:

> advice: 11,000 ECU;
> promotion of the report: 1571 ECU.

Funding was principally assured by sponsors (ECU 6400) and sales of the document (ECU 664), the remainder covered by LEADER (ECU 5507).

The main **difficulties** encountered were:

> the lack of coordination between the public and private sector;
> a lack of interest by private tourist companies;
> conflicts with other sectors of the local economy (e.g. fishermen, due to the planned construction of yacht marinas).

The **plan for the development of tourism** determines the projects eligible for LEADER financial support:

> under LEADER I, ECU 839,500 (i.e. 49% of the total budget) was invested in 49 tourism projects;
> with regard to LEADER II, the plan is currently being updated so that it can be implemented and adapted to the new West Cork LEADER area, whose surface area has considerably increased.

FACTSHEET 12 - CASE STUDY N°2
EVALUATION OF THE TOURISTIC POTENTIAL OF THE RHÖN (GERMANY)

The Rhön massif (185,000 hectares) is located in the centre of Germany, at the point where three Länder meet: Bavaria, Hesse and Thuringia. Only the Bavarian and Hessian areas of the Rhön took part in LEADER I, creating two LEADER areas (122,000 inhabitants, 6 districts and almost 90 communes).

At the beginning of summer 1993, the Hessian local action group, "Verein Natur- und Lebensraum Rhön", commissioned a Munich consultant's firm to draw up a **plan for the development of tourism**. This was the first time since 1945 that an action had been undertaken for the whole of the Rhön massif, including its Thuringian area, which was part of the former GDR.

Designated by UNESCO as a "Biosphere Reserve" (*) in 1991, the Rhön thus took on a special value from the touristic point of view and an exemplary status in Germany. The conservation of a traditional landscape (the territory is known as the "Land of great horizons") and the boosting of local economic activities were therefore at the heart of the tourism development programme.

A detailed **study** of the **situation** was initially carried out by combing six analyses covering supply, demand, competition, trends, the territory's strengths and weaknesses and its opportunities and risks respectively.

For each of the six analyses, the methodology used was as follows:

1) ANALYSIS OF SUPPLY

This involved the following stages:

> determining the territory to be analyzed;
> sending a questionnaire to all communes concerned;
> analyzing the data already available (documentation from the communes, reports and statistics);
> drawing up "checklists";
> visiting 42 communes;
> consulting participants from 22 communes;
> drawing up a tourist profile for each commune.

This led to:

> a quantitative analysis carried out commune by commune for each of the three Länder concerned;
> a qualitative analysis for the entire Rhön biosphere reserve;
> an informative map clearly indicating places of interest, accommodation and tourist services available.

Examples of the results of the analysis of supply:

> *when the advertising material was analyzed, it was noted that tourist organizations were not using the territory's "unique selling position", namely its "reserve of the biosphere" label;*
> *the analysis of supply clearly showed the differences in the existing level of facilities between the three Länder: a good leisure infrastructure in the Hessian part; slightly less touristic supply in the Bavarian part and virtually nothing in Thuringia.*

2) ANALYSIS OF DEMAND

A **survey of customers** was carried out using two methods: **the personal oral interview and the written survey.**

The **oral survey** was carried out at the most important tourist sites in the Rhön by students of the Fulda High School and was organized by external experts. In all, 613 interviews were carried out.

The **written survey** covered 85 hotels, representing all forms of accommodation (from hotels to guest rooms). In order to motivate people interviewed and to maximize the number of responses, participation in the survey was linked to a draw for a free weekend in the Rhön. Despite this, only 182 questionnaires were returned (answer rate: 20%), probably due to the length of the questionnaire.

In total, 335 day-trippers and 460 holiday-makers were interviewed in the two surveys carried out in summer 1993 and winter 1994. The data was processed by computer, checked, corrected and then analyzed and presented in a report.

The cost of preparing, carrying out and processing the results of the survey amounted to ECU 15,000.

Results:

> *75% of visitors were prepared to help pay to protect the environment (an "environmental tax" added per night or to the price of entry to sites and car parks);*
> *touristic supply was judged to be relatively satisfactory. Only the condition of cycle paths and the efficiency of public transport were criticized;*
> *a particularly positive evaluation was made with regard to nature and the landscape, the quality of relaxation, the kindness of the population and the tranquillity of the accommodation;*
> *only one third of visitors already knew that the Rhön had been designated a biosphere reserve.*

3) ANALYSIS OF TRENDS AND COMPETITION

Desk research was carried out on the data and information already available.

4) DIAGNOSIS

The diagnosis was made by comparing the analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the territory and the analysis of the opportunities and risks on the market.

It took into account:

> the results of the different analyses (supply, demand, competition and trends);
> the frequentation of the tourist sites;
> the opinion of the experts interviewed;
> the opinion of customers interviewed;
> an external consultant's point of view;
> comparison with other territories;
> the results of the study of trends.

CONCLUSIONS

The situation analysis was presented in the form of an **intermediate report** and **synoptic chart,** which were both distributed to approximately 120 private individuals and organizations who were asked for their comments and suggestions.
The report was then re-worked within the framework of an "open forum on tourism", a sort of interdisciplinary round table discussion involving four working parties. This forum made it possible to integrate the point of view of the local population into the "external" analyses (strengths / weaknesses and opportunities / risks).

This served as a basis for the development of a "Tourist Guide to the Rhön".

The processes of analysis and evaluation both came up against the following problems:
> size of the territory and local differences;
> missing or incomplete information;
> complex politico-administrative structures;
> differences of opinion;
> problems of representativeness;
> the interviewers' influence;
> the low rate of response to the questionnaires;
> the definition of competition and its analysis.

By evaluating the touristic potential, which was simultaneously carried out "externally" (initial realization by a firm of consultants) and "internally" (follow-up and annual evaluation with local players), it was possible to identify a number of target groups:
> visitors choosing short but more frequent stays;
> relatively elderly but active people, anxious to "remain young";
> demanding holiday-makers as regards environmental protection;
> tourists in search of nature and peace and quiet;
> people in search of a healthy lifestyle;
> families with children.

The step led to a **plan for the development of tourism** containing not less than 270 measures to be implemented in order to achieve the following objectives:
> to go beyond regional borders (3 Länder), the tourist destination to be marketed being the Rhön territory as a whole;
> to promote an image of "The Rhön, an up-and-coming and innovative territory" (and which is a model of local development in Germany thanks to LEADER I);
> to develop the "Biosphere Reserve" label;
> to deseasonalize frequentation;
> to promote the regional and healthy cuisine of the Rhön;
> to encourage local restaurant owners to include regional dishes on their menu and to buy at least 25% of their food from Rhön farmers;
> to encourage cooperation between the tourist operators and local craftsmen;
> to set up a tourist coach service and to restore and perpetuate a local railway connected to the European railway network;
> to have mobile promotional equipment (stands, etc.) enabling the six local tourist associations to jointly take part in fairs and shows;
> to implement joint advertising campaigns.

(*)The Rhön is one of the 340 "Biosphere reserves", spread over 75 countries and chosen by UNESCO under its MAB programme ("Man And the Biosphere"). Following the principle "valorize to protect", MAB aims to encourage the sustainable development of territories worked by man and representative of a particular ecosystem. For example, the Rhön corresponds to a type of medium-sized mountain region particular to Western Europe. A genuine "environmental world observatory", the MAB Programme does not provide financial aid but technical assistance.

OUTLINE OF THE ANALYSIS OF OPPORTUNITIES AND RISKS:

SUBJECT OF THE EVALUATION	OPPORTUNITIES	RISKS
Hotels and restaurants	> Systematic taking into account of the protection of the environment > Diversification of the supply of restaurants: dietary food and vegetarian and regional dishes, in addition to "home" cooking > Greater use of local products > Introducing cooperation between people involved in tourism	> Changing behaviour as regards restaurants and accommodation (requirements increased as regards comfort) > Greater quality and professionalism demanded of service providers > Many service providers cannot stand alone in the face of competition

ENVIRONMENT

FIELD	DESCRIPTION
Territory's surface area (ha)	
GEOGRAPHICAL SITUATION	
Topography / relief principal mountains (altitude) highest summit average altitude lowest point	
GEOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS	
Climate	
average temperature (summer)	
average temperature (winter)	
sunshine (days / year)	
precipitation (days / year)	
precipitation (mm / year)	
average snowfall (cm)	
HYDROGRAPHY	
waterways name water sports; fishing bathing protected aquatic areas water quality	
Stretches of water (natural and man-made lakes, ponds, etc.) name water sports; fishing bathing protected aquatic areas water quality	

FIELD	DESCRIPTION
LAND USE (% OR HA)	
industrial / commercial activities	
habitation	
leisure facilities	
forests	
landscapes / protected areas	
arable land, including: - farmland - pasture - proportion of the land reserved for biological crops (%)	
Flora varieties of rare plants	
Fauna species of rare animals	
Natural sites of particular interest (natural places of interest, waterfalls, peat bogs, old trees, etc.)	
Protected areas	

POPULATION, ECONOMIC ACTIVITY, BUSINESSES AND SERVICES

FIELD	DESCRIPTION
POPULATION	
number of inhabitants	
demographic structure	
WORKING POPULATION	
total: by sector: employed in agriculture - full-time: - part-time: employed in industry employed in crafts employed in trade employed in other services	
employed in tourism - full-time: - part-time:	
unemployment rate	
daily migration rate	

FIELD	DESCRIPTION
BUSINESSES / SERVICES	
bakeries	
butchers	
grocers	
supermarkets	
cooperatives	
farms involved in direct sale	
car hire	
service stations	
taxis	
coaches, buses	
bicycle hire / maintenance	
hire / maintenance of sports equipment	
post offices	
banking services	
doctors, dentists	
pharmacies	
nursery schools / children’s accommodation	
youth centres	
other businesses and services	

ACCESS, TRANSPORT, JOURNEYS

FIELD	DESCRIPTION
ROAD NETWORK	
connections with main roads	
local road network	
RAILWAY NETWORK	
connections with main lines	
LOCAL PUBLIC TRANSPORT	
stops routes timetables fares	
CYCLE PATHS	
PEDESTRIANIZED AREAS - areas closed to traffic - pedestrianized areas	
REGULATED TRAFFIC - crossing built-up areas - skirting routes	
state of the roads	
SIGNPOSTING - signposting for public places - information boards/posts - city plans - tourist maps	
PARKING total number of places no. of places reserved for cars prices	

CULTURE, CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

FIELD	DESCRIPTION
HISTORY	
date founded	
coat of arms	
specific historical events	
famous people	
TIES WITH ABROAD	
historical ties	
individual ties (e.g.: twinnings)	
RELIGION (%)	
ARCHITECTURE, TOWN PLANNING, STRUCTURE	
improvements	
participation	
views, integration of the structure into the landscape	
structure	
architectural fabric	
open spaces	
“VILLAGE RENOVATION” PROGRAMME?	
amount of aid	
CULTURAL ATTRACTIONS	
regional culinary specialities	
customs, folklore	
cultural and folk associations	
festivals	
markets	
regional products	
special events	
local personalities	
legends, proverbs, tales	

FIELD	DESCRIPTION
ENTERTAINMENT	
cinema	
theatre	
opera / ballet	
music	
libraries	
dances	
discotheques	
conferences	
film shows	
evening gatherings, local meetings	
other	
CULTURAL HERITAGE, PLACES OF INTEREST	
churches	
abbeys	
fortified castles	
castles	
ruins	
historical buildings	
historical places	
monuments	
MUSEUMS / EXHIBITIONS	
name:	
exhibition of:	
surface area of exhibition	
opening times	
guided visits	
future outlook	
number of visitors	
ORGANIZED VISITS	
where?	
when?	
with whom?	
duration	
price	

LEISURE / SPORTS

FIELD	DESCRIPTION		
WATER SPORTS	**EXISTING (indicate capacity)**	**ANTICIPATED**	**NON EXISTENT**
Fishing			
Boat mooring facilities			
Boat hire			
Water-skiing			
Canoeing / Kayak			
Windsurfing			

BATHING	Number	area of water in m^2	area of beaches in m^2	number of visitors	number of people employed
Natural stretches of water					
Open-air swimming pools (unheated)					
Open-air swimming pools (heated)					
Indoor swimming pools					
Aquatic centres					
Thermal baths					

AIR SPORTS	EXISTING (number)	ANTICIPATED	NON EXISTENT
Hang-gliding			
Model aeroplane flying			
Paragliding			
Air tours			
Ballooning			
Gliding			

FIELD	DESCRIPTION		
EQUESTRIAN SPORTS	**EXISTING (number, name/place)**	**ANTICIPATED**	**NON EXISTENT**
Indoor horse-riding			
Outdoor horse-riding			
Stud farms			
Box hiring for visitors' horses			
Horse-riding lessons			
Riding paths			
Hiring of horses			
WALKS / CYCLING TRIPS			
Length (km) of walking paths in the local area			
Number of km marked out			
Route maps			
Guided excursions			
Car parks for ramblers - number - number of parking places - price of parking per car			
Accommodation for hikers			
Funicular railways			
Health circuits Number Length (km)			
Information trails (number) Length (km) Length (km) of tracks for cyclists touring the local area			
Number of km marked out			
Cycling route maps			

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FIELD	DESCRIPTION		
OTHER SPORTS AND LEISURE FACILITIES	**EXISTING (number)**	**ANTICIPATED**	**NON EXISTENT**
Golf courses			
Skittles, bowling			
Children's playgrounds			
Climbing walls			
Minigolf			
Squash			
Open-air tennis courts			
Indoor tennis courts			
Table tennis			
Shooting ranges			
Others			
WINTER SPORTS	**EXISTING (number)**	**ANTICIPATED**	**NON EXISTENT**
Toboggan tracks			
Cross-country skiing tracks (km)			
Alpine skiing tracks (km)			
Snow guns			
Ski lifts			
Ski schools			
Skating rinks			
HEALTH/CURE/REST	**EXISTING (number)**	**ANTICIPATED**	**NON EXISTENT**
Health cures			
Balneotherapy, thalassotherapy			
Saunas			
Solariums			
Cure centres			
Kinesitherapy centres			
Physiotherapy			
Therapeutic services			
Beauty centres			
Keep-fit centres			
Other			

FIELD	DESCRIPTION		
LEISURE	**EXISTING (number)**	**ANTICIPATED**	**NON EXISTENT**
Leisure centres and theme parks (ha)			
Zoos, wildlife parks			
Nature parks (ha)			
Games rooms, casinos			
Facilities for other activities and games			

ACCOMMODATION, RESTAURANTS

FIELD	DESCRIPTION
ACCOMMODATION	
Total capacity Number of establishments Number of beds	
Classified according to size: - less than 5 beds - between 5 and 9 beds - between 10 and 19 beds - between 20 and 29 beds - between 30 and 49 beds - between 50 and 99 beds - between 100 and 249 beds - between 250 and 499 beds - 500 beds and over	**NUMBER OF ESTABLISHMENTS**
Distribution according to type of accommodation - hotels - inns - hostels - hotels without restaurants - rest homes, holiday homes, training centres - holiday centres, villas, apartments - guest rooms - youth hostels - farming holidays - campsites, caravaning	**NUMBER OF ESTABLISHMENTS**
% of establishments in possession of an eco-label	

FIELD	DESCRIPTION	
RESTAURANTS	**NUMBER OF ESTABLISHMENTS**	**SEATING CAPACITY**
Hostels		
Speciality restaurants		
Restaurants		
Restaurants and cafes with gardens		
Wine bars		
Restaurants offering regional cuisine		
Tea rooms, cafes		
Cafeterias		
Ice cream parlours		
Bars, discotheques		
Refreshment bars / snack-bars		
Kiosks / fish and chip stalls		
Specialities		

Fairs, Congresses, Conferences

FIELD	DESCRIPTION		
FAIRS, CONGRESSES, CONFERENCES, SEMINARS	**AVERAGE NUMBER PER YEAR**	**NUMBER OF VISITORS**	
Fairs, shows			
Exhibitions			
Congresses / conferences			
Seminars / workshops			
Major sporting events			
Other events			
Meeting rooms (private sector)	Name	Location	Number of rooms
Meeting rooms belonging to the commune	Name	Location	Number of rooms
Other			

FACTSHEET 19 - MODEL QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CUSTOMERS (EXAMPLE OF A THERMAL STATION)

1. Completed by 1 person ☐ 2 people ☐ male/female

2. Place of origin with postal code: . . . .
   country: . . . .

3. Age of person interviewed: less than 45 ☐ 45-55 ☐ 55-65 ☐ over 65 ☐

4. Profession: retired ☐ self-employed ☐ worker ☐ employee ☐
   civil servant ☐ student ☐ other ☐

5. The stay in . . . . was recommended by a
   doctor ☐ other person ☐ an advertisement or newspaper article ☐
   travel agency ☐ other ☐

6. Did you have a brochure on . . . . before you arrived: yes ☐ no ☐
   If so, did you request it ☐ from a travel agency ☐ other ☐

7. Criteria for choice of . . . . : close to home ☐ thermal facilities ☐
   location and environment ☐ climate ☐

8. Purpose of stay: prescribed cure ☐ self-funded cure ☐
   holiday only ☐ holiday and cure ☐

9. Travel by train/coach ☐ car a) as a driver ☐ or passenger ☐

10. In which thermal centres other than. . . . .
    have you stayed for more than 6 days over the last 5 years?

Name of centre	what was better	what was not as good
1	. . . .	. . . .
2	. . . .	. . . .
3	. . . .	. . . .

11. What factors do you think are necessary for a thermal cure or rest home to be successful?
    1 . . . .
    2 . . . .
    3 . . . .

12. What do you think the plus points are of . . . . and what do you like the most?
    1 . . . .
    2 . . . .
    3 . . . .

13. What do you think the minus points are of . . . . and what do you dislike the most?
    1 . . . .
    2 . . . .
    3 . . . .

14. Is the thermal centre peaceful enough? yes ☐ no ☐
    If no, what do you dislike the most?
    The traffic ☐ The nightlife ☐ Other ☐

15. Do you consider it is cheap ☐ correctly priced ☐ too expensive ☐ for the facilities on offer?

16. In your experience, the following facilities were:

	very good	good	satisfactory	reasonable	unsatisfactory
- accommodation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
- restaurants	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
- dietary	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
- baths and care	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
- medical care	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
- cure (organization)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
- welcome and advice given by the thermal establishment	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
- services	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
- businesses	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
- atmosphere	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
- permanent attractions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
- special events	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
- excursions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
- your overall stay	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

17. What facilities were of particular interest to you?

. . . .
. . . .
. . . .
. . . .

18. What do you think is lacking in terms of attractions and events or
what particularly needs to be improved?

. . . .
. . . .
. . . .
. . . .

19. Would you like to see certain groups of clients or age groups better represented and if so, which ones?
1. . . . .
2. . . . .

20. How many times (including this occasion) have you stayed at . . . . ? . . . .

21. Where and how has it changed since your last stay?
1. . . . .
2. . . . .

22. Would you recommend . . . . ? Yes ☐ no ☐
If not, why not?. . . . .

23. Would you visit . . . . again? yes ☐ no ☐
If not, why not?. . . . .

24 Other comments:

. . . .
. . . .
. . . .

Source: Rhineland-Palatinate Tourist Guide (Germany)

FACTSHEET 20 - CUSTOMER REGISTRATION FORM (EXAMPLE)

HOTEL REGISTRATION FORM FOR THE RECEIPTS DEPARTMENT

Please write legibly

Form n° . . . .

Service indication :. . . . . Name and address of hotel . . . . Date stamped by the receipts department

Date of arrival: . . . . Expected date of departure:. . . . . Number of persons: . . . . . .

Name: . . . . First name: . . . .

Date of birth . . . . Nationality. . . . .

Address *(postcode, town)*: . . . .

Accompanied by:

Name: . . . . First name: . . . .

Date of birth . . . . Nationality. . . . .

Purpose of stay: holiday, business, conference, seminar, training, etc.

. . . .

Signature:

OPTIONAL INFORMATION PROVIDED BY HOLIDAY-MAKERS FOR THE COMMUNE:

How many times have you already spent your holidays in . . . . ?

Why did you choose to spend your holidays here?

Regular customer ☐ advertising ☐ press article ☐ travel agency ☐ personal recommendation ☐ other ☐

Principal means of transport used for journey:

train ☐ car ☐ bus ☐ other ☐

Deciding criteria for choosing our region:

relaxation ☐ unspoilt countryside ☐ excursions ☐ sport ☐ price ☐ other ☐

FACTSHEET 21 - MODEL GRID FOR THE SELECTION AND EVALUATION OF A CONSULTANTS' OFFICE

Name of company:..

List of criteria	**Evaluation, marks from 1 to 5**					
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**Comments**
Consultants' office						
Age and size of company						
Presentation / image						
Consultant						
Personal presentation						
Qualifications / training						
Expert with relevant experience						
Communication						
Efficiency						
Team of consultants						
Professional qualifications						
Experts in various fields						
Professional knowledge						
Sectoral knowledge						
Multi-field knowledge						
Specific knowledge of the project						
Discussion / study of new sectoral developments						
Experience						
Projects carried out						
Valid references						
Comparable projects						
Quality and presentation of results						
Confirmed successes						
Implementation						
Project follow-up						
Help during realization						
Ability to solve problems arising during realization						
Projects set up						
Organization						
Progress Plan						
Timetable / estimates						
Other						
Quality / price ratio						

Source: BDU, Reppel + Partner, International Labour Office