

## **RILKE PROJECT**

A project financed by the European Union's  
ECOS/OUVERTURE Programme



## **IMPLEMENTED ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS**

## **TERRITORIAL ANALYSIS AND MARKETING STRATEGIES DEVELOPMENT**

## **STRENGTHENING OF RURAL TOURISM PRODUCTS**

Prepared by:

Žarko Mlekuž, Mlekuž Consulting

Andreja Trojar Lapajna, ICRA

Iris Suban, ROD

Kristina Petrovič, ROD

Robert Brown, RMGB, international consultant

June, 2001

**DRAFT**

## **CONTENT**

General description of the region	3
Basic Development Characteristics	5
Integrated development of the countryside links between agriculture, supplementary activities, tourism and small business	8
Trends in tourism development	14
Qualitative analysis of supply and demand in rural tourism	16
Tourism suppliers in the Rilke project	20
Identification of the suppliers and their individual and common needs	22
Suggestions for organizing links with the other regions in the Rilke project (Duino, Malaga, Tuscany)	24
Organizing	32
Final suggestions	33

# GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE REGION

## Location

The analysis in this report covers the area of three subregions: Idrijsko-Cerkljanska, the Vipava Valley and the Upper Posočje. The area lies in the northwest of Slovenia and covers most of the Northern Primorska. Geographically, it is the area of the upper Soča river basin and its tributary, the Vipava River. The region consists of the central part of the Julian Alps (Triglav 2864 m); the subalpine area of the Julian Alps, and the lowland part of the Vipava Valley where the Alpine and Mediterranean worlds meet. The municipalities of Ajdovščina, Bovec, Cerklno, Idrija, Kobarid, Vipava and Tolmin are situated in these areas.

The Vipava Valley consists of the central valley of the Vipava River, the low Vipavska Brda, the western side of Nanos and Hrušica, the southeastern part of the Trnovo Plateau, and the northern edge of the Karst. Its location is very favourable on the route from the Friuli lowlands (Italy) to central Slovenia. The Vipava Valley lies between the hillsides of the Julian Alps and the Gulf of Trieste at the juncture of the Alpine, Karst and Mediterranean worlds. The lowlands, between 45 and 300 meters above sea level, used to be a gulf but now it is a fertile region very suitable for agriculture.

The Idrijsko - Cerkljansko region is- geographically, economically and linguistically- a balanced area. It is hilly and located in the subalpine zone. It consists of the upper Idrijca river basin and the river basin of its tributary the Cerknica. Three Karst plateaus (The Črni Vrh, the Vojsko and the Ledine Plateau) are a part of this territory. Geologically, this is one of the most interesting regions in Slovenia. The famous Idrija fault runs through the area. The settlements are located in the wider parts of the basins and on the hillside ridges, more rarely on the plateaus. The settlements are mostly small villages, houses in small groups, or, in the hills, a few scattered farms. The terrain has permitted the building of only a few larger settlements. The hills are steep, mostly about 1000 meters high. The highest among them is Porezen. Interesting mountaineering paths of various degrees of difficulty run over these hills leading us to various mountain huts and shelters. The plant life is extremely heterogeneous with alpine flora predominating. Half of the territory is covered by forests.

The Upper Posočje is situated in the extreme north-western part of Slovenia and consists of the municipalities of Bovec, Kobarid and Tolmin. The region borders with the EU (Italy), and links with the Idrijsko-Cerkljansko Region. The highest parts of the Julian Alps and part of the subalpine world from 200 meters above sea level to the Triglav peak (2864 m) are located in this region. The highest parts are included in the Triglav National Park because they are well preserved and they represent unique places of natural and cultural importance. The Upper Posočje is a less developed region by comparison with the rest of Slovenia and also when compared with the Northern Primorska region. Moreover two natural disasters have affected the area in recent years: an earthquake in Posočje in 1998 and a landslide at Mangrt in 2000.

## Population

The whole area covers 1 717 km<sup>2</sup> : the Vipava Valley 352 km<sup>2</sup>, The Idrijsko-Cerkljansko region 425 km<sup>2</sup> and the Upper Posočje 940 km<sup>2</sup>. This is 8.5 % of the territory of Slovenia. It is thinly populated: the population density of Slovenia is 98 inhabitants per square km while it is only 35 inhabitants per square km in this region.

The total population (at 31st January 1999) is 60, 627, which represents 3 % of the population of Slovenia.

The population in individual municipalities and subregions is listed in the table below:

Municipality	Population
Ajdovščina	17809
Vipava	5237
<b>The Vipava Valley</b>	<b>23046</b>
Cerkno	5156
Idrija	11978
<b>The Idrijsko - Cerkljansko region</b>	<b>17134</b>
Bovec	3445
Kobarid	4597
Tolmin	12405
<b>Posočje</b>	<b>20447</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>60627</b>
<b>Slovenia</b>	<b>1987755</b>

The area is characterised by negative demographic trends which are causing a decrease of population in marginal, higher situated settlements and in the side valleys at a distance from the population centres. Economic and social development is, to a large extent, limited to the areas around subregional centres such as Ajdovščina, Idrija and Tolmin and the local centres: Vipava, Cerkno, Kobarid and Bovec.

## Climate

The regions have very varied climates. The Vipava Valley is open to the west and therefore its climate is strongly influenced by Mediterranean weather patterns. For example the growing period is almost two months longer here than in central Slovenia which makes it possible to cultivate some typical mediterranean plants. The mild climate of the valley is, however, often interrupted by the sharp northeastern wind, called the Burja, which blows in gusts (up to 180 kmph), descending into the valley from the peaks above. In the northern plateaus, on the route to the Idrijsko-Cerkljansko Region, a continental type of climate predominates. The climate is sharp and there is a lot of snow in winter. An alpine climate with cold winters and warm summers also predominates in Posočje although some influence of the Mediterranean climate can be felt here too, making the climate a little milder than in other north-eastern parts of the Julian Alps.

## BASIC DEVELOPMENT CHARACTERISTICS

Although the region is quite heterogeneous, it has many characteristics in common with the rest of Slovenia:

- the population density is lower than the average in Slovenia,
- the index of ageing of the population is higher than the Slovenian average,
- the unemployment rate among the active population is lower than the average in Slovenia
- depopulation is still in process,
- the structure of employment of the active population is different from the overall pattern in Slovenia; the shares of the primary and the secondary sectors are higher and the shares of the tertiary and quaternary sectors are lower than the average in Slovenia,
- the share of the rural population is lower than the Slovenian average, except in the Vipava Valley,
- economic indicators show that most of the region is less developed than the Northern Primorska region which is one of the more developed regions of Slovenia.

### Production activities - industry

Agriculture used to predominate in the region but now production and manufacturing are the most important activities.

In the past the Vipava Valley was an outstanding agricultural area. After the second World War the general process of industrialization led to the founding of an agricultural - food processing complex with Yugoslavia as its largest market. Fructal, Mlinotest, Agroind, Vipava 1894 are names which can be mentioned in this connection. It is notable that manufacturing industries in the Vipava Valley are some of the oldest in Slovenia, since most of the companies have existed for over one hundred years. The valley is home to the oldest textile factory in Slovenia - Tekstina - and the milling industry - Mlinotest. Vipavska klet (the Vipava Wine Cellar) was founded in 1894 and still has the largest facilities in Slovenia. The furniture factory Lipa is well-known, as well as the constructing company SGP Primorje etc. The economy of the Idrijsko - Cerkljansko region is dominated by electro-industrial companies: ETA Cerklje, Kolektor Idrija and Rotomarka Spodnja Idrija, followed by the metal and wood industry. Electro-industry is also present in Posočje: AET Tolmin and Iskra Bovec. In addition there is a metal-processing industry represented by Metalflex Tolmin, Gostol Tolmin, TIK Kobarid.

### Largest economic companies

The locomotives of economic development with the highest number of employees and the largest business turnover are former companies in social ownership which have been privatized and restructured to a large extent in line with the changed social and economic system. The companies are very important to small businesses in the local economy, tourism and agriculture, because they offer many opportunities for business cooperation in their sector.

## Business support environment

A list of business support agencies in the region has been produced. The organizations which work in this field in the whole area are organized on the level of the Northern Primorska Region. In addition individual regions have organized business support networks primarily on the level of former municipalities, or current administrative units: Ajdovščina, Idrija and Tolmin. Among all the regions included here, the business support environment is best developed in the Vipava and Ajdovščina region. It is weakest in the Upper Posočje. The most important organizations in individual regions are listed below:

### The area of the Ajdovščina administrative unit

#### **Developmental institution: The Development Agency ROD, Ajdovščina (ROD)**

The municipalities of Ajdovščina, Vipava, Komen

Development coalition of the Vipava Valley with partners:

- Center for social and consulting work Ajdovščina,
- The Vipava wine-grower and wine-producer association Lože,
- The “Doli” association for preserving the Lokavec tradition, Lokavec,
- KVZ (The Institute of Veterinary and Agriculture) Nova Gorica, KSS (AES - Agricultural Extension Service), Ajdovščina subsidiary,
- Nova KBM d. d. , Department of Nova Gorica, Ajdovščina Unit,
- District Chamber of Commerce and Industry for the Northern Primorska region Nova Gorica,
- District Chamber of Craft for the Northern Primorska region Ajdovščina,
- Small Entrepreneur Worker Education Fund of the Northern Primorska region, Ajdovščina,
- Tourist Information Centre of the Vipava Valley, “Ajdika” Ajdovščina,
- ZRSZ (ESS - Employment Service of Slovenia), department Nova Gorica, Employment office Ajdovščina,
- The Natural and Historical Heritage Preservation Institute Nova Gorica,
- The Culture, Education and Sports institution Ajdovščina,
- Cultural-artistic association POC and
- Natural and Historical Heritage Preservation Association GORA
- private consulting firms

### The area of the Idrija administrative unit

#### **Developmental institution: Development Agency of Idrijsko-Cerkljansko, Idrija (ICRA)**

- The Municipality of Idrija
- The Municipality of Cerklje
- The Idrija Administrative Unit
- Entrepreneur Club Idrija
- Entrepreneur Club Cerklje
- Agriculture-consulting service Idrija
- District Chamber of Commerce and Industry for the Northern Primorska region
- District Chamber of Craft, Idrija
- Small entrepreneurship development fund Idrija and Cerklje
- ZRSZ (ESS - Employment Service of Slovenia), Employment office Idrija,
- consulting firms

The area of the Tolmin administrative unit

**Developmental institution: The Posočje Development Centre, Kobarid (PRC)**

- KVZ (The Institute of Veterinary and Agriculture) Nova Gorica, KSS (AES - Agricultural Extension Service), Tolmin subsidiary,
- Nova KBM d. d. , Department Nova Gorica, Tolmin Unit,
- District Chamber of Commerce and Industry for the Northern Primorska region Nova Gorica,
- District Chamber of Craft for the Northern Primorska region Tolmin,
- consulting firms and consultants

# INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT OF THE COUNTRYSIDE LINKS BETWEEN AGRICULTURE, SUPPLEMENTARY ACTIVITIES, TOURISM AND SMALL BUSINESS

## Agriculture

Agriculture in the Vipava Valley is developed as an important economic activity in itself.. The significance of agriculture is, however, much wider. Preserving the cultural scenery and developing the countryside are strategic goals which are not realizable without appropriate development of agriculture. Farm tourism or countryside tourism in general is difficult to imagine without appropriate basic agricultural activity.

The main agricultural activities are: agronomy, wine growing, fruit growing, stockbreeding, and poultry breeding. These are described below:

**Agronomy:** The main line of agriculture on the lowland farms is agronomy (61 % in the Vipava Valley), while the higher farms mainly sell meat, milk and dairy products and some potatoes (Posočje, Idrijsko-Cerkljansko).

**Wine growing:** is carried out exclusively in the Vipava Valley. This is the main activity of the famers in the Vipava Valley, particularly on the Vipava Hills.

**Fruit growing:** There are 56 hectares of orchards in the area of the Vipava Valley. The pears and the apricots are native fruits, originating from the Vipava Valley. Fruit growing is not so developed in Posočje and in the Idrijsko-Cerkljansko region. (apples, pears).

**Stockbreeding:** is the most important branch of farming on the farms that are situated higher in the hills. Their sole income is derived from selling meat and milk. A special characteristic of farming in Posočje is mountain pasturing which enables the farmers to produce alpine cheese (cow, goat, sheep) and curds.

## Tourism

Tourism as an economic activity can only be developed when there are appropriate natural conditions, suitable infrastructure and an organized supply of tourist services. On this basis it is safe to say that there are substantial possibilities for the development of tourism in the regions of the Vipava Valley, Idrijsko-Cerkljanskego region and Posočje, which have not yet exploited.

In the last decade only a few tourist centres have developed offering a more complex range of tourist services, such as the Alpine Tourist Centre Bovec and the Skiing Centre Cerkno. Both centres offer in a single resort alpine skiing (skiing centres Kanin and Črni vrh) and other related forms of sports and recreation. In addition accommodation facilities and other tourist and catering facilities have been built. Besides these tourist centres, some tourist services have also been emerging in larger towns such as Ajdovščina, Vipava, Idrija, Cerkno, Most na Soči, Tolmin and Kobarid.

Some more distinctive tourist attractions and services have been developed notably: the Vipava Wine Road, the Antonij Shaft in Idrija, Partisan Hospital Franja, The Kobarid Museum, Trenta - Triglav National Park, and the Mangrt Road.

Development of farming has also brought gradual development of tourism on farms and countryside tourism. In the Vipava Valley where there are good possibilities for farming, there is also the greatest potential for farm tourism development. The possibilities are somewhat smaller in the Idrijsko-Cerkljansko region, there too there are some relatively large farms which could also develop some tourist services. The potential for the farm tourism is smallest on farms in Posočje where tourism is already relatively well developed (compared with the other regions), but agriculture is much weaker.

The present tourism potential profile of the region could be described as follows:

- very favourable natural conditions and a rich natural and cultural heritage offer large potential for the tourist development of the region,
- the region is easily accessible, particularly by roads and is situated near important tourist markets,
- road connections, particularly inside the region are too poor for the development of tourism of a higher quality,
- tourist facilities and services are distributed inside the regions very disproportionately; this is, in a way, a disadvantage - on the other hand it is an opportunity for cooperation and complementarity,
- healthy food production, healthy crops and products present a great development potential which can be realized most successfully in connection with tourism,
- great variety of the tourist services offers good opportunities for linking and designing products attractive to the market,

Regarding the development of demand in tourism, in view of the possibilities for the development of tourist services and products in the region, a greater role for tourism and its more rapid development can be planned. It can also be assumed that the development of tourism will be fastest in the regions where the potential has been least exploited so far.

Tourism development will have to be given an appropriate place in the regional development strategy and, above all, in the development programme and more complex development projects. The new situation which will arise in Slovenia when it joins the EU will present new challenges in the field of economic development. This will also have a significant influence on the development of tourism and agriculture.

## SWOT analysis of the area:

### The Vipava Valley, Idrijsko - Cerkljansko, Posočje

## Introduction

This analysis of the advantages, weaknesses, opportunities and threats covers the area of three subregions: Idrijsko - Cerkljansko, The Vipava Valley and the (Upper) Posočje. Geographically, this is the area of the upper Soča River and its tributary the Vipava. The area consists of the central part of the Julian Alps (Triglav 2864m), the subalpine world of the Julian Alps and the lowland part of the Vipava Valley, where the alpine and mediterranean worlds meet. The Municipalities of Ajdovščina, Bovec, Cerklje, Idrija, Kobarid, Vipava and Tolmin are situated in this area.

## Strengths

- **Natural, ecologically quality environment, enabling biodynamic farming and different forms of sports and recreation in nature.**

Production of healthy food, crops and products, typical for this area and, connected with this, spending healthy vacations or free time. This is possible with relaxation and a variety of sports and recreation in natural environment: walks, mountaineering, alpinism, trekking, cycling, horseriding, cross-country skiing, skating, sky-gliding, sky-diving, kayaking, rafting... Apart from spending free time actively, the area makes endless number of forms of relaxing and a bit more lazy “battery recharging” possible...

- **Rich natural and cultural heritage, quite well- formed identity of the area, which is a potential for farm and rural tourism.**  
Natural parks, typical settlements and villages, castles, mansions, technical monuments, all this rich and diverse offer, making possible researching, learning, experiencing, all for relaxing and pleasant free time, vacations, visits, tours...
- **Great variety of the scenery from alpine, sub-alpine world to the lowlands of the Vipava valley (the mediterranean influence).**  
The extraordinary variety of the scenery in Slovenia, the variety in geographical view is revealing itself to the greatest extent in Primorska, where in the short distance from Triglav to the Adriatic Sea numerous scenery and geographical phenomena take place, which is extremely attractive to tourists, travellers, wanderers...
- **Special conditions for cattle-breeding, alpine economy, fruit-growing and vine-growing - extraordinary variety and transitoriness**  
The variety and high quality is also shown in products and crops, such as wine, cheese, apples, cherries, peaches, potatoes, honey, herbs...
- **Existing know-how and traditional crafts as the potential for small entrepreneurship development.**  
Preserved tradition of craftsmanship: lace-making, wool products, products made of wood, basketry, beehive paintings
- **Hospitality**  
The people are friendly, talkative, optimistic and are nice to strangers, tourists, visitors.
- **Location**  
This is an area of a very interesting character. It is an area that connects the Alps with the Adriatic Sea. It has the tourist attractive “transversal”, connecting Central Europe with the Mediterranean.
- **Existing programmes and projects in the countryside.**  
Lace, The Vipava Wine Road, The Road of Peace, cycling track by the Soča River.
- **Capability of leading and managing the programmes and projects.**  
Development Agencies ROD, ICRA, PRC.

## Weaknesses

- **Lack of connection, no common concept of development, not enough positive examples, no clustering.**  
The development of the area has not been planned so far. There are not enough joint projects to ensure a faster development of the area, the development potentials remain unused.
- **Crumbledness in farming.**  
Small farms, not enough cultivable areas, the quantities of crops and products for sale are too small as well.

- **Low quality and small volume in tourism**  
In many cases we can see unsuitable quality of the tourist services, not meeting the expectations and needs of the tourists.
- **Lack of the entrepreneurial know-how and knowledge of foreign languages**  
The era of the former political regime was stopping the development of entrepreneurship and creativity. This is shown in lack of know-how, skills and enterprise. There is not enough self-initiative, self-confidence and the fear from entrepreneurial risk is too big.
- **Not yet formed common identity and image of the area**  
The area has been developing in different ways so far, depending on individual subregions and different degrees of development. there are no integrated concept of designing theme paths, itineraries and other tourist products for the area. The people are not willing enough to cooperate.
- **Not enough funds for promotion of marketing in farming and tourism**  
The lack of funds for common marketing and promotion is constantly present.
- **Too poorly developed tourist infrastructure, accommodation and tourist facilities and the amount and quality of services**  
The area is far from enough developed in the touristic sense - regarding the human and natural potentials available and regarding the opportunities given by the trends of the tourist demand.

## Opportunities

- **Use potentials for biodynamic farming, alpine pasturing, fruit-growing, winery and alternative tourism**  
Existing and new natural parks: The Triglav National Park, The Trnovo Forest, The Wild Lake.
- **Connect agriculture and tourism**  
Farm tourism - rural tourism - small entrepreneurship.
- **Forming a common identity, image and trademark system for individual common products and crops of the area.**  
Trademarks for the lace, cheeses and wine.
- **Developing new innovative products and services in the countryside**  
Important orientation towards healthy way of life as well as spending free time in a healthy way.
- **Establishing of effective modern promotion and marketing**  
At the same time establishing good organizing (e. g. consortium) Joint participating in the national and international tenders.
- **Innovativity and entrepreneurship promotion and innovation marketing**  
Promoting the development of entrepreneurship effectively, performing consulting services, trainings, motivating, education.
- **Forming common programmes of the countryside development and projects**  
Above all, connect the area with joint excursions and looking for new programmes (e. g. »visitors centres«).
- **Simplifying the long and expensive bureaucratic procedures in establishing and running a new entrepreneurship in the countryside**  
A really effective “antibureaucratic programme.”

- **Encourage »bed and breakfast« offer.**  
This kind of offer can be implemented relatively soon.

## Threats

- **Contiuning non-organized development**  
Development of the countryside without planning deepens all the negative trends, shown in the difference in the degree of economical and social development between these areas and the central and urban ones. Without active development politics no improvement of the existing situation can be expected, but, on the contrary - we can expect more problems connected with development.
- **Development towards low quality, no identity, cheapness, in many cases also harmful mass production**  
This is a process which will probably continue if there is no proper long-term development politics.
- **Causing ecological damages, further destruction of cultural scenery**  
The destruction of he scenery will continue if depopulation of the countryside does not stop.
- **Abandoning farming where it is not profitable enough, degradation of alpine pasturing**  
Without more suitable regional development and countryside preserving politics the process will continue.
- **Defining individual activities in the urban plans and their non-functionalism, which is an obstruction to the development**  
More effective urban planning will be one of the basic conditions of the development.
- **High investment costs and expencive loans**  
A big obstruction and a great danger to the survival of the entrepreneurs ( incapability to pay back the loans!)
- **Import of cheaper food from the countries of the eu, especially from italy.**  
This will become even a greater danger when Slovenia joins the EU.
- **No law of the supplementary activities**  
Without suitable legislation a faster development of the entrepreneurship on farms will not be possible.
- **Unfriendly politics towards national parks and mountain highlands.**  
If protecting the nature is not connected with permanent developmentand suitable help from the state, there will be no development!
- **Lack of initial funds and encouragment at the beginning of running an antrepreneurship.**  
It is necessary to diminish the obstructions for entering entrepreneurship.

## Farm tourism and rural tourism

Farm tourism and rural tourism are two specific forms of tourism, which are currently weakly represented within the tourism of the region, but whose role will gain in importance in future Analysis of the factors defining the future role and significance of tourism on farms in our region indicate that special emphasis should be placed on these two forms of tourism for the following reasons:

- long-term trends in tourism demand are orientated towards healthy high quality holidays and spending free time, learning and exploring,
- farms, countryside, natural space, are the areas with the greatest unexploited potential for tourism development,
- agriculture will experience radical changes inside the EU; tourism as an activity is one of the most important possibilities for adapting the farms to this new situation;
- since the competitiveness of agriculture will be reduced in the new environment of Europe, tourism remains one of the few economic activities that can be successful in the countryside
- with Slovenia's accession to the EU, the region will no longer be a border area and this will give rise to increased tourist inflows- daily visitors from the direct hinterland in Italy in particular,
- greater competition in the tourist market will call for the development of new high quality tourist products which will in turn encourage the linking-up of tourist services on the farms and also the creation of connections with the other tourist suppliers in the region.

More rapid and extensive tourism development is important from many points of view-economic, social and urban - all of them confirming the wider dimensions and social importance of this economic activity.

- From the economic point of view tourism will contribute to the greater economic and business success of the farms as well as better competitiveness of integrated tourist services in the region,
- From a social point of view tourism will make possible a higher level of social security for the people, higher income and better possibilities of employment, thus reducing the migration of locals from the farms and remote villages,
- From the urban point of view tourism activities will enable agriculture to fulfill its role of preserving the cultural landscape and cultural identity of the rural area.

In addition to the points mentioned above farm tourism and countryside tourism also have importance at national level:

- Preserving and developing the countryside represents a form of preserving Slovenian national space and identity in the border areas,
- economic and social development supported by tourism contributes to more proportionate development both inside the region and in comparison with other regions.
- tourism development in the region also means complementing and linking with other tourist services on a wider, national level.

# TRENDS IN TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

## Trends in tourism development worldwide

Competition in the tourism market is growing. Globalization of supply and demand in tourism has become a reality, concerning all those who work in tourism. All this means that more attention and resources must be devoted to marketing which is becoming the most important business function of every tourist company as well as every tourist centre and region. The following statements are more true than ever before:

- The key to success in tourism is to fulfill the needs and expectations of the tourists,
- It is necessary for the tourist suppliers to be marketing-orientated in their services,
- A prerequisite for success in tourism is knowing the tourists and their needs and understanding the coming trends in tourism.

### Kinds of »new age tourists« (Cohen)

unorganized tourist	organized tourist	
<i>explorer</i>	<i>individual mass tourist</i>	<i>organized mass tourist</i>
adventurer, seeker of new adventures and experiences	travelling to well-known or fashionable tourist destinations	organized holidays (packages), wish for homeliness

### Changes in consuming habits (Niles 1991)

- increase in care for the environment
- healthy lifestyle
- looking for »the different«

### What are holidays and travel good for?

- renewing psychological and physical power, health strengthening
- compensation for everything that we miss in our everyday life
- escape from our everyday life ( the modern industrial urbane world)
- learning about and communicating with the different
- travelling as education and »broadening the mind«
- travelling as freedom as self-confirmation
- travelling as happiness

### »New« tourism

There are fast and deep changes in tourism changed by:

- the consumers - the tourists
- technology
- management
- production
- global changes

»New« tourist (L. France, Sustainable tourism 1997)  
What is »new« tourist like?

MORE EXPERIENCED

- more experiences with travelling, holidays, offer
- greater significance of quality
- higher education
- quick »experience based learning«
- more fun and adventure
- greater variety
- special interests

CHANGED VALUES

- from »have« to »be«
- just for fun
- care for the environment
- respect for the different
- relations
- seeking the real and natural

NEW LIFESTYLES

- flexible working hours
- higher income
- more spare time
- healthy lifestyle
- more frequent and shorter holidays
- travelling as a way of life

CHANGED DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

- families without children
- aging of the population
- smaller households
- more single people and couples
- various social groups

BETTER FLEXIBILITY

- spontaneity
- »mixed consumers«
- unpredictability
- less planning of the vacations
- changed habits in holiday reservations

HIGHER INDEPENDENCE

- consumers want to be »in charge of their free time«
- bigger risk taking
- be different from the crowd

# QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF SUPPLY AND DEMAND IN RURAL TOURISM

## Analysis of the suitability of Slovenian regions and the Rilke project regions for tourism

Slovenia, the area of the RILKE project in particular, where important Slovenian national and regional parks are situated, is suitable for so called “**Soft tourism**”. This is suitable for rural areas, since it offers an abundance of possibilities for individuality and direct contact with nature. Therefore it is becoming more and more successful in comparison with mass tourism. The following factors are in favour of “soft tourism”:

- people like shorter vacations more than once in a year and to more than one destination,
- tourists want comfortable accommodation, therefore the share of renting apartments, half board and bed and breakfast is increasing,
- people use the lunch time for a “daily” trip,
- demand for sport and recreational activities is increasing and the supply of both affects the choice of the place where they want to spend their vacations,
- individual environments enable tourists to meet new people, make new acquaintances and make friends with new people - therefore the human factor is very important.

A well preserved natural environment, with individual services skillfully integrated, is very important for successful implementation of “soft tourism”. The services must in particular include a number of activities, since the tourists tend to spend their vacations more and more actively -as mentioned above. Preserving the environment as well as providing a variety of tourist services (art workshops, summer schools, sport activities etc. ) are the basic trends in tourist service development in Slovenia and in the area of the RILKE project.

## Analysis of tourist products in Slovenia and in RILKE project regions

Based on the accepted Resolution on the strategic goals in the field of tourism development, several strategies have been developed for marketing tourist areas (clusters) and tourist products in Slovenia.

A tourist area consists of a complex of tourist companies, natural and cultural attractions and suitable services which interactively function in a geographically and economically homogeneous unit. They represent the basis for the recognizable image of Slovenia in the eyes of potential tourists and improve the competitiveness of the tourist services.

Tourist areas in Slovenia are as follows:

- mountains and lakes,
- the coast and the Karst,
- the spas,
- the towns and
- countryside.

Tourist services are the interlinking of the resources, services and infrastructure offered by companies to satisfy the specific needs and desires of the tourists. Tourist products are games and entertainment, congresses, wine roads, active vacations, green - blue sports, white sports, alpine roads, events, preventive programmes. Every tourist area can produce different tourist products and every tourist product can be produced in different tourist areas.

*Table: Example of a national portfolio register of tourist offers*

<b>Products</b>	<b>Coast and Karst</b>	<b>Mountains and lakes</b>	<b>Spas</b>	<b>Towns</b>	<b>Countryside</b>
Games and entertainment	•	•	•	•	
Congresses	•	•	•	•	
Wine roads	•				•
Active vacations	•	•	•		•
Green-blue sports	•	•	•		•
White sports		•			
Alpine roads		•			
Trekking	•	•			•
Events	•	•	•	•	•
Preventive programmes			•		

*The tourist products listed above represent a segment of several tourist offers. Green-blue sports, for example stand for the following offer: trekking, horseriding, golf, tennis, rafting and the tourist product called “event” includes the following offer: chamber, carnivals etc.*

Tourist areas in the RILKE project are:

- mountains and lakes,
- the Karst,
- towns,
- countryside.

*Table : Example of a portfolio register of tourist offer within the regions in the RILKE project*

<b>Products</b>	<b>The Karst</b>	<b>Mountains and lakes</b>	<b>Towns</b>	<b>Countryside</b>
Games and entertainment		•	•	•
Congresses		•	•	•
Wine roads				•
Active vacations	•	•		•
Green-blue sports	•	•		•
White sport		•		
Alpine roads		•		
Trekking	•	•		•
Events	•	•	•	•
Preventive programmes	•	•	•	•

## Analysis of demand in Slovenia

The basic reasons for visitors to come to Slovenia are holidays, relaxing, and fun (67 %), followed by business reasons, visiting relatives and friends and health reasons. This does not hold for Croatia where the main reason is business. Among the motives for coming to Slovenia water-related activities are by far the most important (lakes, the sea). The tourists are most attracted by the natural beauty of Slovenia together with its safety and hospitality. Perhaps this is because most of the tourists come from an urban environment (90 %).

Slovenia as a tourist country is most attractive to the middle-aged and the older generation of tourists. Almost half of the tourists who come to Slovenia are between 30 and 49 years old. One third of the tourists are over 50 years old.

75 per cent of the tourists are employed, 13 per cent pensioners. It is notable that 14 per cent of the tourists are managers and high officials who could be considered upper class. Half of the tourists are experts like engineers, technicians or clerks who could be considered middle class. The great majority (80 per cent) of the tourists have higher or university education.

36 per cent of the tourists travel alone, almost as many travel in couples. They spend their holidays almost exclusively with their partners or families (95 %). 56 per cent of the tourists come to Slovenia individually without a reservation and 24 per cent individually with a reservation. Only 10 per cent come to Slovenia for organized holidays or travelling with agencies. According to the data, provided by the VAS tourist agency, 75 per cent of foreign tourists make reservations before coming to Slovenia and 70 per cent of them make it directly in the tourist facility and 30 per cent through tourist agencies.

## Tourist service analysis in the regions of the RILKE project

The extent of the tourist services very much depends on the accommodation facilities. This is particularly so in resort tourism in which efforts are being made to reach as high a number of nights spent as possible.

The supply of tourist accommodation facilities of the whole region has been analysed and the table below provides information on the number of tourists and the nights spent in 1999.

Municipality	Accommodation		Tourists total	The nights spent		
	rooms	beds		foreign	total	foreign
Ajdovščina	51	127	4436	2663	8825	5370
Vipava	16	65	654	219	1451	731
<b>The Vipava Valley</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>5090</b>	<b>2882</b>	<b>10276</b>	<b>6101</b>
Cerkno	95	240	5913	1911	20752	6437
Idrija	30	74	1527	935	3903	1567
<b>Idrijsko - Cerkljansko Region</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>7440</b>	<b>2846</b>	<b>24655</b>	<b>8004</b>
Bovec	943	2555	43002	22733	100937	60512
Kobarid	154	629	11865	6392	19010	11976
Tolmin	151	478	5317	2145	9590	3848
<b>Posočje</b>	<b>1248</b>	<b>3662</b>	<b>60184</b>	<b>31270</b>	<b>129537</b>	<b>76336</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1440</b>	<b>4168</b>	<b>72714</b>	<b>36998</b>	<b>164468</b>	<b>90441</b>
<b>Slovenia</b>	<b>29600</b>	<b>78746</b>	<b>1749532</b>	<b>884048</b>	<b>6056563</b>	<b>2741218</b>

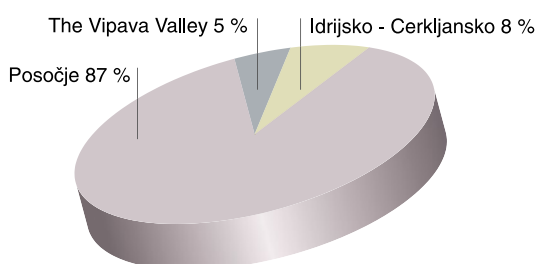
The following table compares the region with Slovenia in general indicating the region's share of accommodation facilities and numbers of tourists well as the number of nights spent.

Accommodation facilities		Tourists		The nights spent	
rooms	beds	total	foreign	total	foreign
4, 9	5, 3	4, 2	4, 2	2, 7	3, 3

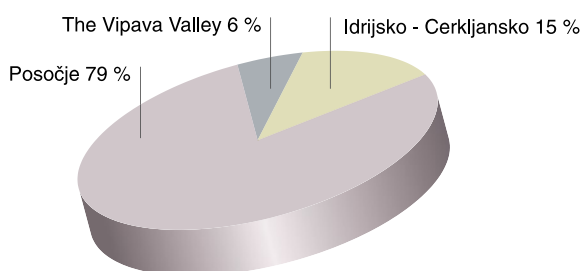
The Region has about 5 per cent of the rooms or beds in Slovenia which are obviously not so occupied as the Slovenian average. Only 2, 7 % of the nights spent and 5, 3 % of beds means that resort tourism is still far behind the Slovenian average. Besides, there are great differences within the region itself. The following table shows the shares of the individual indicators.

Subregions	Accommodation facilities		Tourists		The nights spent	
	rooms	beds	total	foreign	total	foreign
The Vipava Valley	4, 6	4, 6	7	7, 8	6, 2	6, 7
Idrijsko-Cerkljansko	8, 7	7, 5	10, 2	7, 7	15	8, 9
Posočje	86, 7	87, 9	82, 8	84, 5	78, 8	84, 4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

The shares of the accommodation facilities, the number of tourists and the nights spent by the tourists show that resort tourism is highly concentrated in Posočje where 88 per cent of all the beds are located.



It is notable that Posočje has 78, 8 % of the nights spent. Comparison of the data shown here indicates that the accommodation facilities are better exploited in the Vipava Valley and in Idrijsko-Cerkljansko region which has 15 % of all the nights spent in Slovenia with only 7, 5 % of all beds.



Knowing the development possibilities of the whole region and the anticipated trends in tourist demand, the following suggestions can be made for future development :

- providing more proportionate disposition of the accommodation facilities which would increase their number, particularly in the Vipava Valley and in the Idrijsko-Cerkljansko region,
- considering the natural conditions for tourism in the Vipava Valley and in the Idrijsko-Cerkljansko region the development of smaller accommodation facilities can be expected, adapted to the environment and the activities in farming and small business; this makes sense particularly in connection with the development of farm tourism and countryside tourism.

## TOURISM SUPPLIERS IN THE RILKE PROJECT

In the RILKE project a number of tourist suppliers are included, particularly tourist farms, but also hotels, inns, agencies and tourist companies. The selection was made with some help from the representatives of local communities - the municipalities which know the situation in tourist services in their areas very well. Tourist suppliers are proportionately represented in all three subregions and located within integrated areas within the local communities.

The Vipava Valley, which is as an area with particularly well-developed agriculture and a quite distinctive identity, is primarily represented by tourist farms that are also engaged in wine-growing, wine-producing and tourism. Tourist suppliers are located in the Vipava wine-growing district, where wines of controlled geographic origin are produced. The region is richly endowed with architectural monuments - castles, manors and architecture of high quality in the towns and villages. Therefore it is not surprising that Vipavski Križ, a real architectural gem, is included among the main tourist attractions of the area.

The Idrijsko-Cerkljansko region is also represented by several farms, engaged in tourism- Although they have some common characteristics with the farms in the Vipava Valley (beautiful nature, typical architecture), this region differs significantly from the other two. It is defined by its typical mountainous scenery with large plateaus and narrow and steep valleys. As in the Vipava Valley the rich natural heritage is combined with interesting historical, cultural and architectural monuments. The town of Idrija with its rich mining tradition is represented here by the Antonij Shaft. The Kenda Manor (Kendov dvorec) is also included in the project, having top quality hotel and culinary attractions in its unique architectural ambience. In this way a well balanced set of tourist attractions and services is being consciously developed in the Idrijsko-Cerkljansko region and this is reflected in its involvement in the RILKE project and in its links with other regions.

In Posočje the representatives of tourist suppliers are located in three narrower areas: Trebuša in the Tolminsko region; the area around Kobarid and Breginj in the area of Kobarid; and the Trenta Valley in the Bovec region.

The area of Trebuša is close to the Idrijsko- Cerkljansko region both in its location and the type of tourist services which it offers. It is represented in the RILKE project by a typical inn, a fish farm, and a sport-recreational agency. The area, particularly interesting because of its remoteness and wildness, was very well chosen, for it connects the Idrijsko-Cerkljansko region with the central Soča Valley in Posočje. The Kobarid region is located here and it is represented by a farm tourism connection with the town Kobarid and its well-known Kobarid Museum. To complement that, there is Breginj with its typical village architecture. The most northern and the most mountainous part of Posočje is represented by tourist suppliers in the Trenta Valley, which is also the location of the Triglav National Park, tourist farms and the Trenta Hall (Dom Trenta) with a museum and other tourist attractions..

A short description of the tourist suppliers included in the RILKE project indicates some of their common characteristics which are important because they are the starting point for meeting the goals of the RILKE project.

Some key characteristics are as follows:

- the tourist suppliers represent a typical set of tourist services in farm tourism in their own environment, but in most cases the quality of the services is not high enough; the services are not complex enough ;and they lack connections with the wider services offered by the area,

- all the tourist suppliers in farm tourism are located in a rich and interesting natural environment, complemented by an attractive landscape. The landscapes of the different regions are very varied; from the lowland landscape of the Vipava Valley, to the mountainous territory of the Idrijsko-Cerkljansko region and Trebuša, to the highlands consisting of alpine valleys surrounded by high mountains in Posočje.
- the common characteristic of all the regions is that they do not only have an interesting natural heritage, but are also rich in cultural and historical heritage all of which are included in the tourist attractions.
- the most common starting point when working with the chosen suppliers in the RILKE project is that they all have good development potential and the ability to contribute to improving and complementing tourist services, linking with each other and achieving a better organization of local tourism.



*Kenda Mansion*



*Vipavski Križ*

## IDENTIFICATION OF THE SUPPLIERS AND THEIR INDIVIDUAL AND COMMON NEEDS

### The method of choosing, more accurate review of offers and needs

The offerers were chosen by the Steering Committee together with the Project Group. The basic aim was to achieve proportionate representation of the suppliers in the region of the RILKE project and to permit the establishment of two focus groups:

-the first focus group comprising the beginners, i. e. the suppliers who are only starting a new business or adding some new service to the existing ones

-the second comprising established suppliers who would be able to realize individual planned activities within the RILKE project immediately ( The internet presentation, for example)

More was learned about the suppliers by conducting a series of interviews. These were carried out by individual development agencies and their representatives in the area of the Vipava Valley, the Idrijsko-Cerkljansko region and Posočje.

*Table 1: Number of offerers by groups*

<b>status of offerers</b>							
society	3	hotel	1	farm with accomodation	1	board	1
inn	2	excursion farm	3	Local Comunity	1	fish farm	1
inn with accomodation	3	farm	2	hunter's hut	1	tourist mine	1
tourist agency	1						

<b>name</b>	<b>name of facility</b>	<b>specifics of the food offered</b>	<b>seats</b>	<b>beds</b>
Angel Vidmar	The Zavrh Farm	goatlets, dairy products	20	0
Miloš Gruntar	Grof's Cellar	cold meats (salami...), sausages, cabbage, jota (sour cabbage stew)	20	0
Jordan Cigoj	Turistična kmetija Arkade	old dishes, slow food	80	0
Harij Bat	Turistično društvo Vipavski Križ	home-cooked food	100	0
Matjaž Lemut	Vinska klet Tilila	little snacks	16	0
Judita Demšar	Kmetija "Na Ravan"	cheese, other dairy products	50	0
Drago Polak	Šebrelje Tourist Society	not applicable	0	0
Peter Brus	The Želinc Farm	country cooking	120	28
Marija Tušar	Tourist Farm "Pri Flandru"	country cooking	90	18
Darko Kavčič		country cooking,	45	45
Robert Fortuna	Refreshment room "Kmečki hram"	Idrija žlikrofi, piglet, cold meats	100	15
Tomislava Bogataj	Tourist Farm "Pr' Jureč"	country cooking	78	5
Kendov Dvorec	Hotel The Kenda Manor Hotel	traditional home cooking	150	23
Rudnik	Tourist mine - The Antonij Gallery	not applicable	0	0
Borut Nikolaš	Maya, sport tourism	not applicable		
Franc in Marjetka Obrekar	Podkorito Refreshments	traditional food (crackling cake, blood-pudding, maw, meat products, jota, bread, fruit brandy, herb brandy)		
Albin Makuc		traditional food, fish		
Boris in Lidija Pirih	fish farm	Fish selling	0	0
Marko Pretnar	Tourist Farm pri Podmajerju	Home cooking - porridge - minestrone soup, jota, vegetarian food,	55	14

Attachment 1: Table of expressed needs for different forms of assistance

Participants	Study tour Toscana	Study tour Malaga	Designing an integrated graphic image of the region	Farm Programme	Souvenirs	Including the offerers	Landscape consulting	Promotion, joint promotion material	Exchange of experiences	Tourist Informator	Languages	For the tourist worker	Legal advice	SAPARAD - Business plan	Arranging collection
Irena Velikonja															
Breginjski kot															
Željko Cimprič															
Marko Pretnar															
Judita Demšar															
Lidija Pirih															
Marjetka Obrekar															
Alenka Gruntar															
Harij Bat															
Robert Fortuna															
Dušan Bogataj															
Martin Hladnik															
Peter Brus															
Vencelj Tušar															
Matjaž Lemut															
Jordan Čigoj															
TD Šebrelje															

## Examples of good practice

The RILKE project will be based on the identification of good, successful practices in individual regions which can serve as examples and on the encouragement, through consultancy and linkages, of innovative projects which can become equally good and successful.

So far we have not identified the examples of good practices in Slovenia, since we believe that this has to be built on the criteria, defined together, for all the partners involved in the RILKE project (the representatives of Italy, Spain and Slovenia) and their included examples of entrepreneurs.

This task of Benchmarking has to be done by December 2001, according to the Workprogramme.

## **SUGGESTIONS FOR ORGANIZING LINKS WITH THE OTHER REGIONS IN THE RILKE PROJECT (DUINO, MALAGA TUSCANY)**

### **Approaches to tourist service development**

The concept of tourist service development- dealing with the development of farm tourism in the case of the RILKE project- is defined as designing a specific set of tourist services aimed at chosen market segments. Defining the concept in this way is of key importance, since the long-term success of tourist suppliers depends very much on their success in marketing.

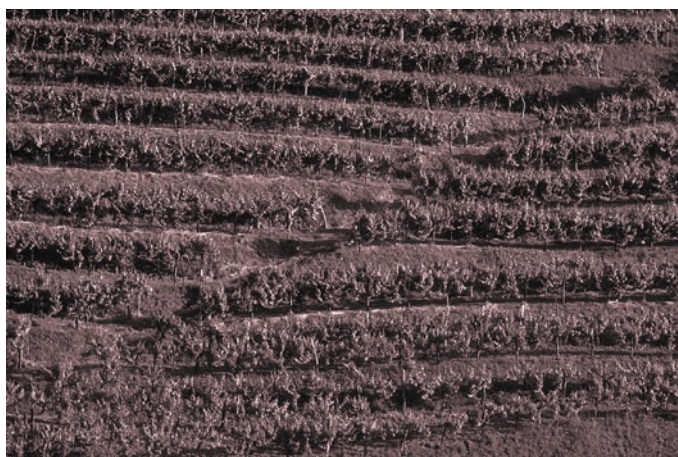
This definition of the development concept is based on the analysis and estimates of the present situation and development potential both of individual suppliers and the tourist regions as a whole. Approaches to designing tourist services are outlined below while concepts connected with tourism demand will be presented later.

Considering the trends of demand in tourism and the potential of the regions in the RILKE project the following elements are proposed as guidelines for the work on the RILKE project:

- **Natural, varied, healthy** - These are the key elements which must be considered in the development of tourist services by all the tourist suppliers as a mark of distinctiveness and quality. The extraordinary natural heritage of the whole region will only be fully appreciated if all the tourist suppliers build their services on complementing these elements. This is particularly important when dealing with the key tourist services: accommodation, food, and tourist attractions
- **Recognizable, typical** There are numerous characteristics which distinguish the regions from other tourist regions. A successful set of tourist services can only be designed by emphasising the specific characteristics which will draw the attention of and attract potential tourists. Since the region has a number of very specific characteristics, this has to be used as an opportunity for designing a varied and diversified set of tourist services. This will make it possible to design interesting tourist routes.
- **Organized, connected, complex** Numerous but scattered tourist attractions and services cannot be successful in the long-term. A varied and interesting »mosaic« can only be created by connecting and organizing individual suppliers and services in an appropriate way.

The development concept presented above will be worked out in practice using the concrete examples of selected tourist suppliers.. On the basis of the questionnaire and the interviews carried out with individual suppliers information has been collected on the possibilities for realizing the proposed development concept. Consideration was also given to existing tourist services (and their development potential) which are not directly included in the project. The proposed approaches for realizing the development concept are listed below by regions.

## The Vipava Valley



*Vineyard*

In the Vipava Valley the elements of natural, healthy and varied can be realized on the basis of agriculture production which gives rise to real opportunities for the production of a variety of high quality foods. Two agricultural activities are worth special mention - wine-growing and fruit-growing. High recognizability as the land of wine, sun and the Burja, already achieved by the Vipava Valley as a whole must also be developed at the level of each individual farm. The main emphasis must be on a common service related to food and drink. Healthy diet and healthy wine drinking are trends which can be followed with great success by each farm tourist supplier.

In addition to services linked to accommodation and food there must be a connection with the wider services offered by the surrounding area. In this context it is worth mentioning the connections between the tourist farms and cultural and architectural attractions such as Vipavski Križ, Vipava castle, and numerous churches and smaller architectural monuments as well as examples of technical heritage like the Huh's mill.

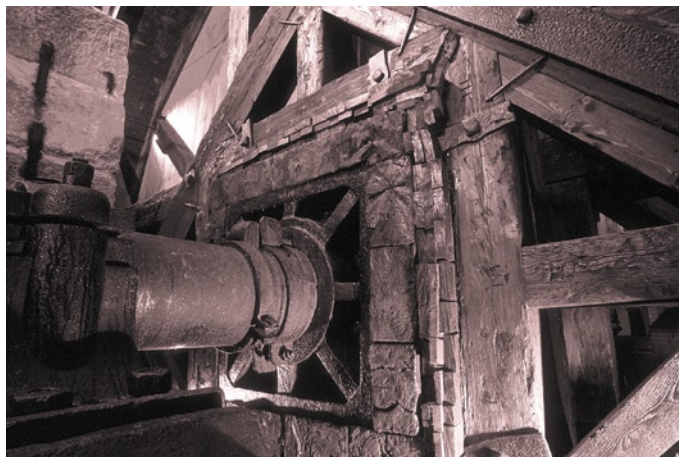
The basic elements of branding which should strengthen the market positioning of the Vipava Valley should be the wine-growing farm, the wine itself and the castles. These elements are indications of quality; quality of life and quality experiences. The Vipava Wine Road is another important linking element. In future it is proposed to link as many tourist attractions as possible - from tourist farms to events. It is also suggested that cycling tracks and walking paths should be created.

## The Idrijsko - Cerkljansko region

The Idrijsko - Cerkljansko region can also build its distinctive image on the basis of the natural and healthy. Compared with the Vipava Valley more emphasis can be put on the wild as well as the remote. The areas containing the tourist farms in the Idrijsko and Cerkljansko region can realistically be promoted as an opportunity to get away from it all: "Far from the Madding Crowds". The natural and healthy environment can be complemented by the wildness, the peace, the healthy rhythm of life and a sympathetic attitude to nature. The locations of the suppliers in the region makes it possible to develop the services mentioned above while at the same time enabling the services to become more complex: the town of Idrija, the Antonij Shaft, the town of Cerklno, the skiing centre, the Partisan Hospital Franja.

The region has to continue to build on the elements that have proved to be the key vehicles of its identity, namely the Idrija lace in particular and the "žlikrofi" in the field of cooking. As in all the

regions it is reasonable to include the technical and cultural heritage : the churches, mills, and sawmills. Upgrading tourist services by creating a number of paths is necessary - ie walking paths as well as cycle tracks.



*The Idrija Kamšt -  
the largest wooden  
water wheel in Europe*

### Posočje

Posočje, represented by three regions of tourist offer positions in the area of Trebuša in a similar way as it does in Idrijsko and Cerkljansko. Taking account of the natural conditions and the existence of organized tourist services related to sports and recreation it is possible to envisage combining an activity holiday with exploring and experiencing nature- rivers, waterfalls, caves, remote valleys and plateaus offering the basic elements of wild nature and tranquillity. In this region it is reasonable to envisage the development of culinary attractions based on fish dishes. The basis for this is already exists on the Idrijca river: fishing, fish farming, and typical local inns.

Connecting sport with cuisine is also evident in the region of Kobarid, which is the central part of the Soča Valley. The river which gives the valley its name must continue to act as a vehicle for the distinctive image of the region - representing clean, beautiful and interesting nature combined with numerous opportunities to participate in sports and recreation of various kinds.

The Kobarid region has a distinctive position as a region with many attractions related to the area's historical heritage: the Soča Front, the Kobarid Museum, Tonevc's castle. The interesting architecture of Breginj can be added to this list. There is also high quality cuisine which has been developed by the inns and restaurants in the locality. The region of Kobarid brings together a number of attractive features for the tourist- beautiful natural scenery, opportunities to explore nature, cultural and historical heritage, and interesting cuisine which, it is intended, should be developed and upgraded in the future.

The region of Trenta, which is directly included in the RILKE project, is located on the edge of the Triglav National park. Extraordinary natural sights, a well-preserved natural environment and the possibility of experiencing and exploring nature are the basic elements on which the tourism of the region must be built.



*The Soča river*

Although the region's culinary attractions are still very modest there are good possibilities for developing them. Mountain pasturing, the breeding of goats and sheep, and the making of cheese from goat and sheep milk, has to be more actively promoted as a distinctive element in the image of this region. Cheese means to Posočje what wine means to the Vipava Valley.

Analysing the development potential and building the image of the individual regions has drawn attention to some **common characteristics** which must be included in designing and **developing joint tourist products in the region.**

The concept for tourism development in the whole region can be realized in at least three basic directions :

- designing joint tourist products, based on learning about nature, experiencing it and natural sights,
- designing joint tourist products, based on learning about the cultural, historical and ethnographic heritage of the region,
- designing joint tourist products, based on gastronomy (food and wine).

Some outlines of tourist routes are listed here. Working on them in detail and describing all the natural sights and suppliers will only be possible in later phases of the project.

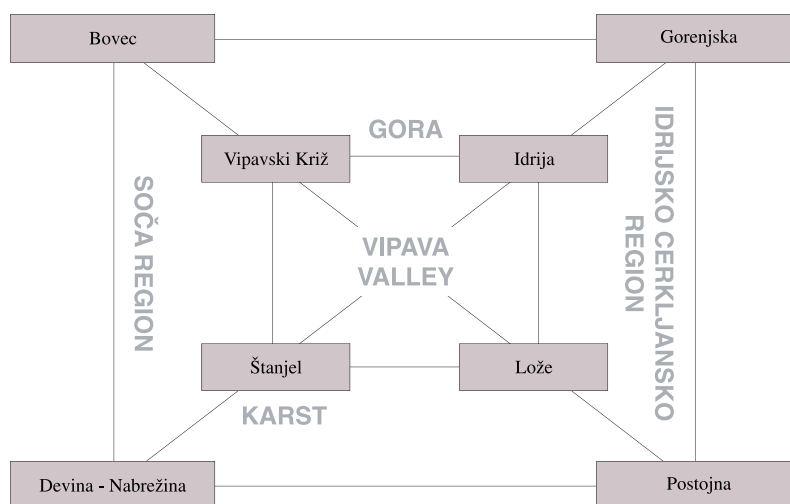
#### Experiencing nature as a tourist product

Since tourist suppliers of all the regions with beautiful natural scenery are represented in the RILKE project it is reasonable to connect the farm tourism with sightseeing. It is therefore suggested that a tourist route should be organised, connecting the Vipava Valley with the Idrijsko - Cerkljansko region, going further to Posočje and then returning to the Vipava Valley.

The part of the road which runs through the Vipava Valley could be the same as the existing wine road since the landscape, particularly the vineyards, are always interesting to see. In the area of the Idrija region the main natural sight is the Wild Lake (Divje jezero); the road could then continue to the Partisan Hospital Franja near Cerknov which primarily a historical site although the gorge itself is very interesting. From there the road would go through the Idrija Valley to Trebuša where there is an attractive waterfall which is worth seeing, called Pršjak and the valley of Trebuščica. The last part of the road would go up through the Soča Valley to Trenta - the region of the Triglav National Park with the highest mountains of the Julian Alps, the source of the Soča river and Soška Korita.

## Tourist products of cultural and historical heritage

This proposed tourist road would take a similar route to the one mentioned above but would connect the most attractive cultural and historical sights of the region instead of the natural ones. In the Vipava Valley these would be the castles and manors: the Lože Castle, the Vipava castle, the Zemono manor, and Vipavski Križ. In the Idrijsko-Cerkljansko region the following should be included: the Antonij Shaft, the Idrija museum, The Kenda manor (Kendov dvorec), the Hospital Franja. Posočje would be represented by the Kobarid museum and the Tonevc castle, the Kluže fort and the Ethnographic museum in Trenta. It would be good to link this road with other existing roads, making it a part of the Road of Peace which goes along the Soča Front and the Ferrari Road which runs through the Vipava Valley and the Karst.



## Tourist product of gastronomy

The RILKE project gives the tourist farms in the regions included in the project a unique opportunity to connect with each other and to build cooperation. All the suppliers should be included in the tourist gastronomic route which would make it possible for the tourists to learn about the diversity of food and drink on offer in the region.

The basic concept is that every tourist farm should offer a few typical dishes and beverages that are specific to their particular area. In addition the road should make it possible for the visitor to learn about the dishes that are specific to the whole region but differ from one area to the other, like “štruklji”, for example.

The culinary road should also enable the tourists to learn about the wide choice of specific products which are available such as different kinds of cheese and meat products.

There is a great possibility for the farms to cooperate when it comes to beverages. Since the culture of wine drinking is becoming more and more important it gives the possibility to offer the wines from the Vipava Valley with the dishes produced on the tourist farms of the whole region. It makes sense for the regions which do not themselves produce wine to offer the wines of the wine-growing region which is closest to them. In this way the identity of the region would be strengthened.

The basic characteristics of all the tourist products which need to be developed and improved in both quality and quantity are the following:

- they interlink and complement each other: the tourist programme can offer all three key products,
- the products are (or will be) varied, reflecting the diversity of the region where the alpine, subalpine, the Karst and the Mediterranean landscapes meet,
- the products are orientated towards the modern trends in tourist demand and have a development potential which will enable the tourist suppliers to be competitive and thus economically successful.

## Market segments

Basing ourselves on a poll of tourist suppliers it is possible to evaluate the existing market segments. Knowing the global trends and particularly the trends that are present in Europe we estimate that the existing market segments will continue to be the most important in the future. It will therefore be important to achieve a higher level of tourist services and turnover- a higher number of tourists and visitors and a higher number of nights spent. The seasonal character of the demand must be reduced. After developing tourist services we should achieve a higher number of tourists and visitors and nights spent out of season with the same or related existing market segments. The results of the poll, with some statistics added, give the following picture of the market segments:

country	status	segment
Slovenia	families, groups, individuals	holidaymakers, active holidaymakers, trippers, visitors
Italy	families, individuals	trippers, visitors, holidaymakers
Austria	individuals, families	active holidaymakers, holidaymakers, trippers
Germany	individuals, families	active holidaymakers, holidaymakers
Benelux	individuals,	holidaymakers

The evaluated age group - percentages of the existing segments - is shown in the next table.

The largest market segment are the tourists and visitors in the age group from 21 to 40 years. There are no significant differences between the groups from different countries, therefore we estimate that the data shown here hold for all the existing market segments.

market segment	0 - 20 yrs	21 - 40 yrs	40 - 60 yrs	over 60 yrs
holidaymakers	20	45	25	10
active holidaymakers	15	65	15	5
trippers - visitors	20	45	35	10

In the future we expect the age structure to change as the result of demographic changes and changes of the demand in tourism and also the changes of the tourist services in the region.

We estimate that the following changes should occur in the age structure of the guests in the next decade:

market segment	0 - 20 yrs	21 - 40 yrs	40 - 60 yrs	over 60 yrs
holidaymakers	20	35	30	15
active holidaymakers	20	50	20	10
trippers - visitors	10	30	40	20

The changed age structure will have a positive influence on the seasonal character of tourist demand since the demand of the oldest age group in particular will focus on the non-seasonal months..

We are planning that, with the expected changes, in the near future the existing segments will still be the most important, but some changes are anticipated concerning the importance of individual markets. The importance of individual markets in the future is shown in the following table:

country		status		segment	
Slovenia	•	families	••	holidaymakers	••
		groups	••	active	••
		individuals	•	holidaymakers	•••
				trippers	•••
Italy	•••	families	•••	trippers, visitors	•••
		groups	•••	holidaymakers	••
		individuals	•••		•••
Austria	•••	families	••	active	•
		groups	••	holidaymakers	•
		individuals	••	holidaymakers	••
				trippers	
Germany	•••	families	•••	active	•••
		groups	•••	holidaymakers	•••
		individuals	••	holidaymakers	
Benelux	••	families	••	holidaymakers	••
		groups	••	active	••
		individuals	••	holidaymakers	

\* very important ••• important •• less important •

Defining the importance of individual market segments can also serve as the basis for further planning and development of tourist services, which should be adapted as far as possible to the specific needs of the chosen market segments. At the same time this is the selection for the planning of future activities. The priority market segments demand greater investments into marketing activities. The working list presented above is only a starting point. More substantial marketing activities are only possible on the basis of well prepared marketing plans for the whole region.

## Marketing activities

Development and designing the services and products of the tourist suppliers participating in the RILKE project, will mainly be realized through consultancy activities and different forms of training in the future implementation phases of the project. At the same time it is reasonable to implement certain marketing activities which would help to improve the existing marketing efforts, increase occupancy rates, reduce the seasonal character of tourist demand, enhance profitability and increase the economic and social impact of tourism in the region.

The starting point for more efficient marketing by suppliers included in the project is better organization and branding. Taking into account the modern possibilities for marketing which are becoming more and more important in the world nowadays, it is essential that the internet is used to present all the suppliers; organize exchange of information; and to make reservations. This information network must be linked to the system which already exists in Slovenia.

A skeleton plan of proposed activities in the field of marketing is set out below:

- presentation of suppliers on the Internet and establishment of systems for information exchange and accepting reservations,
- presentation of the suppliers and the keynote tourist products in a brochure,
- presentation of the tourist services to the media, press conferences, and visits of reporters to the suppliers
- selection of the tourist agencies in the region, that will be engaged in the promotion and sale of the chosen tourist products.
- establishing contacts with specialized tourist agencies abroad,
- offering suppliers concrete consultancy assistance with the development and growth of their tourist services

Under “consultancy” we understand consultancy in the the fields of:

- architecture (designing architectural outline schemes, co-financing project documentation.. ),
- landscape (outline schemes of landscape arrangements, the farm surroundings or any other kind of service.. ),
- obtaining funds,
- preparing business plans,
- designing integrated graphic images, choosing the names for new products..
- legal, organizational consulting (preparing contracts.. ),
- other practical consulting, needed by individual suppliers to strengthen their services and upgrade them to a higher level, higher quality - not only for individuals, but on the level of joint services.

The plan is a skeleton plan and will be supplemented according to the findings of future phases in the implementation of the project.

## ORGANIZING

The fact that that tourist services are very scattered and there is a lack of connections between the suppliers is a major disadvantage, typical of the whole region. This makes it impossible to take advantage of many opportunities which can only be effectively realized by coordinated activities. The interviews with individuals indicated that all the suppliers are aware that further development is only possible by connecting, cooperating and joint planning of activities. The need for common activities in the field of marketing, promotion and sale, was particularly emphasised.

Designing a more extensive and coherent set of tourist services in which the whole region is involved, will not be possible without an organized and systematic approach with all the suppliers participating together with the public sector.

Recently some organization of tourism has been established under the Law on Tourism, the purpose of which is to coordinate the developmental and promotion activities in a region. Local tourist organizations are being formed but these mostly function in one or more local communities. This kind of organisation does not yet solve the problem within the whole region.

Meeting these goals, which are also the goals of the RILKE project, will only be possible if some organisation is established which will bring together all the tourist suppliers in the region, who are interested in its development. In our view it will be necessary for an interested tourist agency to undertake the tasks of connecting, organizing and promoting; alternatively a new company could be established for this purpose. In any case, it is necessary that the company in charge of the key organisation activities should cooperate closely with the suppliers as well as with the local communities and local tourist organisations.

## FINAL SUGGESTIONS

The analysis of the situation in the region comprising the Vipava Valley, the Idrijsko-Cerkljansko region and Posočje has shown some characteristics that can be very helpful with the work of the RILKE project. Some other studies and analyses which refer to the existing state of tourism and development problems and possibilities have been used as the basis for further work.

The final findings and approaches outlined in this report as the result of the studies undertaken so far and the development possibilities are the following:

- the region has the needed developmental sources for further economic and social development,
- the situation and development possibilities in the field of agriculture make it possible to increase the role and significance of this activity for development of the region of a higher quality,
- tourism, as a promising economic activity, which is developed disproportionately in individual regions, still has potential for a faster development of a higher quality which has not been fully exploited,
- one of the key approaches seems to be the possibility of connecting agriculture, tourism and entrepreneurship in the whole region, which will contribute to realizing the strategic goals of the region: higher quality of life, increased economic development, a decrease in the decline of the countryside.
- Great importance should be attached to open cooperation over the border, especially with the municipality of Duino-Aurisina which is the main partner in the project and is also geographically very close to the region. The sharing of concrete experiences and the possibilities of cooperating with Tuscany and the Spanish representative, Malaga are equally important
- The RILKE project is an opportunity for improving international cooperation; strengthening specific suppliers and their tourist services; and connecting separate services into a complex of services which can become a marketing product (for example, a suitable itinerary, offered in the region of the RILKE project, together with the Italian partners)

The activities within the RILKE project will be continued and the findings and conclusions put forward as a set of concrete recommendations and suggestions.