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**Challenges and Opportunities for the Tourism Industry in
Aschaffenburg and Seinäjoki**
A Comparison

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Thesis Abstract

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The objective of the thesis is to compare tourism industry in Seinäjoki, Finland, and Aschaffenburg, Germany, and its effects on regional development. The research method used is qualitative analysis, where the regions are evaluated in the form of a SWOT analysis. Based on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, development ideas for improving the tourism strategies in both regions are given.

As main sources for the research were used tourism portals of the cities in question, information from the state ministries, and interviewing contact persons from local tourism organizations.

The ground for comparing exactly these two regions is that the cities are approximately of the same size, situated in two different countries, and it would be useful to evaluate if they could utilize some aspects of the other region's tourism development for improving their own tourism industry. Seinäjoki is the childhood home and later the study place of the author; Aschaffenburg on its behalf the target of her student exchange and place of residence for one and a half years.

Keywords: tourism, Aschaffenburg, Seinäjoki, comparison, regional, development

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Tämän opinnäytetyön tavoitteena on verrata matkailuelinkeinoa ja sen vaikutuksia alueelliselle kehitykselle Seinäjoella ja Aschaffenburgissa, Saksassa. Tutkimusmenetelmänä on kvalitatiivinen analyysi, jossa alueita arvioidaan SWOT-analyysin muodossa. Perustuen vahvuuksiin, heikkouksiin, mahdollisuuksiin ja uhkiin esitetään parannusehdotuksia molempien alueiden matkailustrategioille.

Pääasiallisina lähteinä on käytetty kyseessä olevien kaupunkien matkailuportaaleja, tietoja valtionministeriöiltä, sekä paikallisten matkailuorganisaatioiden yhteyshenkilöitä haastatteleamalla.

Kannustimena juuri näiden kahden alueen vertailulle oli, että kaupungit ovat asukasluvultaan suunnilleen saman kokoisia, sijaitsevat erilaisissa maissa, ja olisi hyödyllistä arvioida, voitaisiinko toisen alueen matkailun kehittämisestä saada uusia näkökulmia oman matkailutalouden parantamiseksi. Seinäjoki on laatijan lapsuuden kotikaupunki, myöhemmin opiskelupaikkakunta; Aschaffenburg puolestaan hänen opiskelijavaihtonsa kohdekaupunki ja asuinpaikka puolentoista vuoden ajan.

Keywords: matkailu, Aschaffenburg, Seinäjoki, vertailu, alueellinen, kehitys

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Abbreviations

EC	European Commission
EU-27	The European Union with 27 member states. This was from 1 January 2007 to 30 June 2013.
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
SWOT	Analysis method, where strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats are evaluated

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

This paper will discuss tourism industry in Aschaffenburg, Germany, compared to tourism industry in Seinäjoki, Finland, and the surrounding regions of the cities. It will take the form of a SWOT analysis. The neighboring communities are also essential when discussing tourism of the cities, because they are an important part of it. Therefore they are taken into account in the SWOT analysis. Both Aschaffenburg and Seinäjoki are potential holiday destinations for many kinds of tourists, domestic as well as foreign. To make the regions better known and more attractive, it has to be first analyzed, what issues need attention when focusing on creating a further development strategy for the tourism industry of Aschaffenburg and Seinäjoki. It is the objective of the thesis to find out what these issues are and which ones are the most important ones.

Firstly the influence of tourism on the national economies of Finland and Germany will be discussed. Then the target regions are presented, and described, after which follows the actual SWOT analysis. Finally the results of the thesis will be presented, with development ideas for every field of the SWOT analysis.

1.2 Methodology

This thesis is a qualitative research, as a means of which the SWOT analysis will be used, where the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats are evaluated separately in the case of Aschaffenburg and Seinäjoki. As main sources were used information among others from the Ministry of Employment and the Economy, tourism portals of the cities, and the information received by interviewing Ulla Jussila, managing director of Etelä-Pohjanmaan Matkailu Oy, translated The Tourism of South Ostrobothnia, a regional sales and marketing organization owned by the communities and cities of South Ostrobothnia, and

Brigitte Duffeck from the Mainland Miltenberg - Churfranken e.V.

1.3 Hypotheses

The potential in tourism in both regions is still likely to be underestimated. Neither of these two cities in question, and their regions, are well known for their tourism, but they both have their own features, based on which their tourism could be developed further. Not only in the sense of international tourism, but also domestic and especially regional tourism should be promoted more than it is done at the moment. Regional tourism is little appreciated in both regions, but especially in Seinäjoki.

Before researching the topic further, the supposition is that one important opportunity for developing the tourism of both cities is regional cooperation. The tourism potential of the surrounding regions of Aschaffenburg and Seinäjoki are not as much utilized as they could be. Tourists do not find the attractions outside the cities easily, because of lack of marketing or transportation. In Finland, the distances between cities are long, that is why transportation is expensive, and not arranged if there is not enough demand.

Also the lack of information available in English may keep foreign tourists from finding the sights especially on the countryside. Germany is a strong economy and the German language is important in Europe, therefore English is not spoken everywhere in the country, which is often a problem for a tourist who does not speak German. Finland, on its behalf, is such a small country by the number of inhabitants that basically everyone has to speak at least some English. Finnish is not spoken outside Finland, so Finns have to be able to speak foreign languages in order to improve the economy through internationalization.

2 INFLUENCE OF TOURISM ON THE NATIONAL ECONOMY

The importance of tourism both for companies and citizens has increased significantly in the last decades. According to the estimates of the Directorate-General for Enterprise and Industry of the European Commission, the share of tourism of the GDP of the EU-27 is over 5%. Hotel and accommodation industry employs 2.4 million people, and the total employment influence of the tourism industry in the EU-27 is estimated to be between 12 and 14 million employees. (Tourism Trends). According to UNWTO, tourism made up 9% of the GDP globally in 2013, when taking into account the direct, indirect and induced impact. (UNWTO Tourism Highlights) Therefore it is not unambiguous when speaking about the share of tourism of the GDP.

In the European Union, tourism makes up over 10% of the GDP, including the direct and indirect effects, making tourism one of the key sectors in the European Economy. Tourism also promotes the European image. (EU Policy – Background)

“EU policy aims to promote tourism so as to maintain Europe's standing as a leading destination, and maximize the industry's contribution to growth and employment.”
(EU Policy – Background)

2.1 Trends of Tourism Development

According to Rein, in the tourism forecast for 2030, transformation of society dominates the tourism demand. Aging of people and development of welfare makes the needs for tourism different. Among the change of values, the wish for enjoyment of life, and desire for meaning grow. There will be more demand for tranquility, recovery, and health. The significance of individual services will grow. Everyone has to be treated individually. Customized products and personalized services will be more and more an obviousness. The Asian market comes more significant, and also the German and Finnish tourism industries have to accommodate.

2.2 The Influence of Tourism on the National Economy of Germany

In 2010, the total amount of tourism expenditures was 278.3 billion euros. The share of foreign tourists was 13% with the amount of 36.6 billion euros.

(Wirtschaftsfaktor Tourismus Deutschland)

Germany received 46 million foreign tourists in 2012. The annual growth rate of tourism in Germany is about 7%. (Incoming-Tourismus Deutschland)

This means that in Finland, the proportion of the expenditures of foreign tourists of the total amount of tourism expenditures are bigger than in Germany. This makes sense, because Finland has only about 5.5 million inhabitants (Preliminary Population Statistics) whereas Germany's population is about 80.5 million people (Bevölkerung – Entwicklung der Einwohnerzahl von Deutschland von 1990 bis 2012) Germany and Finland are by land area about the same size. The difference in the proportion of the domestic and foreign tourists can be explained by the differences in the number of inhabitants and the population density. The population of Finland is less than 7% of Germany's and it is spread on a land area almost the same size, so it is natural that Germany has more domestic tourists than Finland. Therefore Finland also has a lot of space to receive tourists.

2.2.1 The Share of Tourism of the Gross Domestic Product

According to Deutsche Bank Research, the share of tourism of Germany's GDP in 2012 was 4.5% (Focus Germany), which is close to the global average, 5%. 69% of the GDP consisted of the service sector, 25.5% of manufacturing industry without building industry, and 4.7% of the building industry. The remaining 0.8% consists of agriculture and forestry, and fishing. (Anteil der Wirtschaftsbereiche am Bruttoinlandsprodukt (BIP) in Deutschland im Jahr 2013).

2.2.2 The Effect of Tourism on Employment

The direct effect of tourism on the employment in Germany in 2010 was 2.9 million persons employed which is 7% of all employed people in the country. The total number of people employed in the field of tourism in Germany was 4.9 million persons. This number includes the indirect and induced effects. (Wirtschaftsfaktor Tourismus)

2.2.3 Trends of Tourism Development in Germany

The economic inequalities grow further. There will be a polarization of demand to cheap and luxury supply. Accordingly, the free time and tourism industries will adjust their supply on the one hand to cheap hotels, self service restaurants, and sleeping containers along the hiking paths; on the other to exclusive offers. Senior and health tourism will increase. Free time and work mix, and therefore flexible trip supply for independent travel according to one's own ideas will be asked for. People travel more often, and make shorter trips. The decision to travel is made more spontaneously. There will not be an ecological revolution. The willingness to make sacrifices continues to be bigger in everyday life than on holiday. Those who have the possibility to travel on account of funding and time, will also in the future travel. A holiday at home will still be because of the lack of money, not an alternative because of environmental reasons. (Rein)

2.3 The Influence of Tourism on the National Economy of Finland

In 2012, approximately 13.3 milliard euros was spent on tourism. The amount includes the expenditure of Finnish and foreign tourists in Finland. The share of

foreign tourists in Finland of the total expenditure of tourists was 32%, which makes up 4.2 milliard euros. (Matkailun merkitys Suomen kansantaloudelle)

The amount of foreign tourists who traveled to Finland in 2012 was 7.6 million. (Matkailun infograafi 2012)

The annual growth of tourism in Finland is about 5%, which is above the global average that is 3-4 %. (Matkailusta tuli Suomen rahasampo)

2.3.1 The Share of Tourism of the Gross Domestic Product

The increment value caused by tourism in 2012 was about 4.43 milliard euros, which is 2.7 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product of Finland. Compared to the increment values of other industries, the increment value of tourism was bigger than that of food industry, over twice as big as of agriculture, and multiple compared to game industry. (Matkailun merkitys Suomen kansantaloudelle)

2.3.2 Tourism Creates Jobs

According to the accountancy of tourism, in 2007 the computational total employment of the tourism industry was 63 944 persons, the amount of employed people being 130 500 persons. The number includes the full- or part time year-round jobs of hotel and catering industry and travel agencies and comparable businesses. Of the other industries, especially the jobs that serve tourism related operations are counted in. (Matkailun merkitys Suomen kansantaloudelle)

The total number of employed people in Finland was about 2 472 000 (Työllisyys ja työttömyys syyskuussa 2007) in 2007, so about 5% of all employed worked for tourism industry that year.

In general, the capital region and Lapland attract the biggest amount of tourists. Yliniemi stated recently, what is the biggest problem for Finnish tourism: the state. The extreme high taxation makes tourism unprofitable. It has been realized, that

tourism is one of the few industries that grow regardless of the economic downturn (Turisteja houkutellaan uusin konstein).

According to Jaakko Lehtonen, chief director of the Finnish Tourist Board, the growth of tourism will continue. The first marketing target country is Russia, Asia following strongly. He says, however, that there are several development needs, among others crossing the border between Finland and Russia, so that the waiting times stay reasonable. In addition, the electronic travel selling system needs to be improved in order to make the buying of trips easier. Finnish tourism entrepreneurs see accessibility one of the biggest challenges especially for the tourism in northern Finland. Inland flight connections should be improved. According to Yliniemi, Finnair, the Finnish airline company which is of the most part owned by the state, does not appreciate domestic flight connections enough. (Turisteja houkutellaan uusin keinoin)

Ministry of Employment and the Economy sees that one of the problems of tourism industry is that the industry is too shattered. The companies should cooperate stronger. According to the Finnish Tourist Board, cooperation in marketing tourism should be developed. (Turisteja houkutellaan uusin keinoin)

2.3.3 Tourism Top Project 2014

Minister of Economic Affairs, Jan Vapaavuori, has launched the Tourism Top Project 2014. Its main goal is to increase the touristic appeal of Finland, support the competitiveness and growth of tourism, and increase appreciation of the tourism industry. The Ministry of Economic Affairs commits together with other operators of the industry determinedly to develop tourism.

As a result of the Tourism Top Project, “the Roadmap of the future of tourism in Finland” will be created. It is a common vision and direction, in which tourism in Finland will be developed. It shares the roles of the operators more clearly, and thereby cooperation and networking grow stronger. (Matkailun kärkihanke 2014)

Through this project Finland strives for developing the cooperation between the operators in the tourism industry.

2.3.4 Tourism Strategy of Finland 2020

The growth opportunities of tourism industry in Finland are good. Tourism creates jobs, brings tax and export income and improves welfare everywhere in Finland. The central idea of the tourism strategy is that developing the tourism industry is based on the known strengths of tourism in Finland, and the growth-driven and networking companies of the tourism concentrations are helped to succeed. Because of the economic situation of the state only the necessary objectives and measures are suggested in the strategy. (Suomen matkailustrategia 2020)

The strengths of Finnish tourism are Finland's unique position as Russia's neighbor, attractive tourism regions such as Helsinki, the archipelago of Turku, Finnish Lakeland, Lapland and Kuusamo, as well as the diversity of the services in the tourism concentrations. Weaknesses are accessibility, high price level, and the fact that Finland is quite unknown.

The objectives and measures are shared into three parts: internal development of the tourism sector, strengthening country image as a tourism target, and improving general industrial politic bases. Central objectives of the internal development of the tourism sector are strengthening the tourism concentrations and networks, supporting growth and development of companies and improving the infrastructure of tourism regions. (Suomen matkailustrategia 2020)

2.3.5 Project MATKO 3 – Coordinating Tourism in South Ostrobothnia 2011-2014

Not only the tourism industry in Finland is on the way to creating better networks but also the plan for cooperation improvement in South Ostrobothnia as a region already exists. MATKO 3 is a project that advances and coordinates development of tourism in South Ostrobothnia in a way that the tourism industry grows and develops further in the region. Its objectives are to make sure that the development operations are correct, and acquire, refine and forward tourism information to the tourism operators of the region. One goal is also to survey the common aims of the tourism industry and create an updated tourism strategy for the region and an operation plan for the next years. Budget for the project is 550 000 € and it is financed by the Finnish state and the European Union: Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment. (Matko 3)

2.4 Comparison

In Finland, the share of tourism is 2.7%, which is below the global average, 5% (Matkailun merkitys Suomen kansantaloudelle). In Germany it is close to the average, namely 4.5% (Incoming-Tourismus Deutschland).

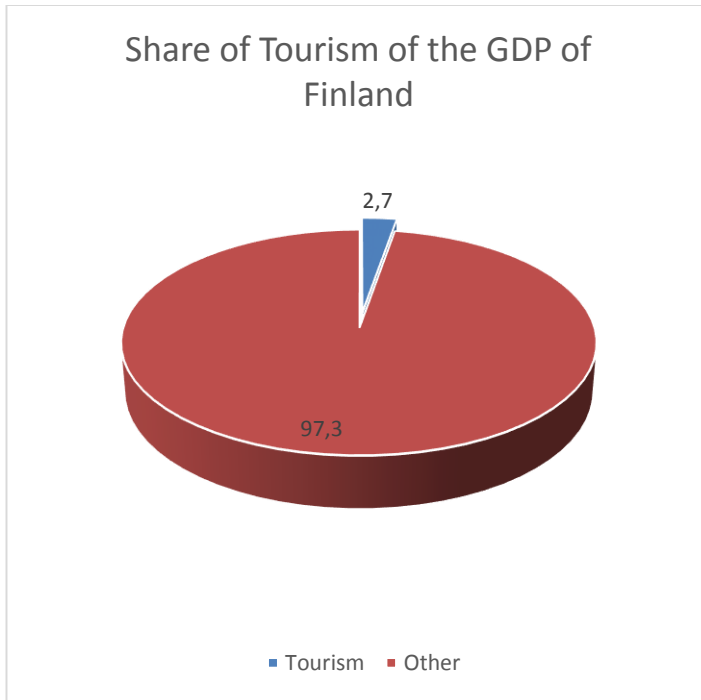


Figure 1 Share of Tourism of the GDP of Finland

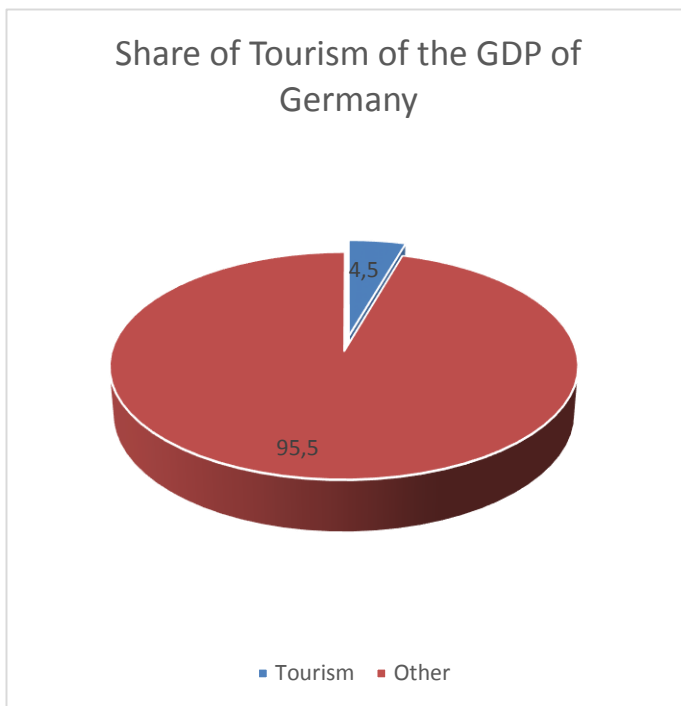


Figure 2 Share of Tourism of the GDP of Germany

The annual growth of tourism is estimated to be 3-4% globally. Both in Finland and Germany, the annual growth is higher than the average: in Finland 5% and in Germany even 7%. (Matkailusta tuli Suomen rahasampo, Incoming-Tourismus Deutschland)

So even though tourism in Finland at the moment does not form any big part of the GDP, the growth of it is fast. Tourism may not yet be remarkable as an industry when it comes to economic aspects, but it is going to be.



Figure 3 Annual Growth of Tourism globally, in Finland and in Germany.

3 Describing the Target Regions

3.1 Aschaffenburg

Aschaffenburg is a city of 69 000 inhabitants in Lower Franconia, in the state of Bavaria, Germany. It is also named as “Bavarian Nice” by Ludwig I, the King of Bavaria, because of its comfortable, mild climate. The history of the city goes back as far as 1000 years, as it was originally founded. In the year 1816 it became a town in the kingdom of Bavaria. Aschaffenburg is known, among other things, for its renaissance castle Schloss Johannisburg and Pompejanum, a replica of a house in the ancient Pompeii. (Aschaffenburg.de)

In 2012, total 73 619 overnight stays were recorded. 17% of these were foreign tourists. Most of the tourists come to Aschaffenburg between May and October. The region Bavarian Lower Main had 446 000 visitors, who stayed altogether 890 000 nights. In addition to that, unregistered number of tourists make day visits to Aschaffenburg and the region. (Tourismus)

3.1.1 Miltenberg

Miltenberg – the pearl of Main is an interesting town. It is small with its only 9000 inhabitants, but every year 200 000 tourists come to visit the town. 64 000 stay overnight. This is because Miltenberg has exceptionally well preserved old town with its traditional Fachwerkhäuser. Miltenberg is situated about 40 kilometers south from Aschaffenburg and it can be reached by train in 30 minutes. Miltenberg is not a part of Aschaffenburg or its administrative district, but I will discuss it as well in the thesis, because it is one significant tourist attraction in the neighboring region.

(Zukunft Miltenberg. Integriertes städtebauliches Entwicklungskonzept)

Miltenberg is known as a well preserved Fachwerkstadt, a city with half-timbered houses in its historic downtown district. Other important aspects, that attracts tourists, are the Franconian Red Wine Hiking Trail, castles from Wertheim to Klingenberg, vineyards and winegrowing tourism, the theme enjoyment in general. Motto of the region Churfranken around Miltenberg is “Churfranken – where the Main is at its most beautiful!”

Churfranken is the name and trademark for the lifestyle in the Bavarian Lower Main area. 22 communities and their people live meanwhile the identity of Churfranken – full of joy of life, culture and people and conscious of enjoyment, tradition associated and creative delight of the future. Because the Churfranconians live in their wonderful landscapes such an attractive life, they seem nationwide desirous to visitors. That is good for Churfranken, because the professional hospitality means also valuable economic impulses to them.

Typical tourists, who come to Miltenberg, are wanderers and cyclists, mostly over 50 years old people. River boat cruisers, guests from all over the world, who want to enjoy life.

The factors, that attract tourists in Miltenberg in particular, are its closeness to the Rhine Main area, its central location in Germany and its landscapes and its offering like winegrowing and wandering routes. Because tourism in Miltenberg is concentrated on hiking, cycling and winegrowing, the tourism season lasts approximately from April to the end of October. In winter, it does not have suitable offering for tourism, for example skiing.

The big cities are of course better known, but Miltenberg in the Frankfurt region is very famous, regardless of its small size. In order to market Miltenberg to foreign tourists, a much bigger marketing budget would be needed. It is unfortunately at the moment not at disposal. (Duffeck)

3.1.2 The Region Lower Franconia

The administrative region Bavarian Lower Franconia is situated in the northwestern Bavaria and it is bounded directly by Hessen and Baden-Württemberg. This thesis will, however, mainly discuss the immediately neighboring towns of Aschaffenburg, and not the whole Lower Franconia area.

3.2 Seinäjoki

Seinäjoki is the center of the district South Ostrobothnia in Western Finland. It is a city of about 60 000 inhabitants. The Seinäjoki region with its 9 municipalities has about 150 000 inhabitants. Seinäjoki is known for its unique administrative and cultural center designed by the academic Alvar Aalto. Seinäjoki was originally founded in 1868, but not until 1960 it became a town.

Today Seinäjoki consist of the original town of Seinäjoki and the communities around it that have become one town through a municipal merger. That is why the land area is large compared to the area of Aschaffenburg, where the not so much bigger number of inhabitants live in a much smaller area.

(Seinajoki.fi)

3.2.1 The Former Communities

The city of Seinäjoki today consists of the original town of Seinäjoki, and three former communities around it. They are Peräseinäjoki, Nurmo, and Ylistaro. In this thesis only Ylistaro will be separately presented as an example of what the region around the city center can offer for the tourism in Seinäjoki.

Ylistaro is a former community of around 6000 inhabitants. Nowadays, after the municipal merger, it belongs to Seinäjoki. Ylistaro offers some remarkable tourist attractions. The gothic style church 'Komia kirkko' is one of the most important of

them and a landmark. It is the third biggest church in Finland - exceptionally big when taking into account the small number of inhabitants.

Wanha Markki is an artist home, the host couple of which have renovated the house in its original old style from the 19th century. In addition to the atelier, they have a gift shop and a catering service. They also have a retirement home for animals. Thousands of people visit Wanha Markki every year. (Wanha Markki)

Kriikun mylly is a historical water mill by the river Kyrönjoki. It was built at the end of the 1870's. It is still owned by the same family, who has restored it to its old glory. Nowadays it is mainly used for organizing different events, like weddings and other fests. The significance of the water mills in villages in the 19th century was much more than just milling the grain – they were also important meeting points, where people heard news and discussed with each other. (Kriikun mylly)

This kind of attractions can easily be left unnoticed, when traveling only to the city and not visiting the surrounding region. In Seinäjoki, many of these interesting attractions are located in the countryside. These attractions are also not yet very much marketed for foreign tourists. They do not have websites in English, which would be important in order to get recognized also abroad.

3.2.2 The Region South Ostrobothnia

The biggest and the most important tourist attractions in South Ostrobothnia, that move great amounts of tourists, are strangely enough, attractions, that have grown "in the middle of nowhere" the amusement park Power Park in Alahärmä, Kauhava.

Tuurin Kyläkauppa, which is originally a small shop in a village called Tuuri, which is a success story and has grown to be a complex of shopping, freetime activities, overnight stay in a hotel and events like concerts.

Also different events in Seinäjoki city attract large amounts of tourists. For example, Provinssirock is a 3-day-rock festival, that brings every year more than 50 000 tourists to Seinäjoki.

Tangomarkkinat is a tango competition and festival of more than 100 000 people (Tangomarkkinat). Vauhtiajot is also growing every year, it is a car racing event with rock concerts, which attracts more than 50 000 visitors every year. (Vauhtiajot)

Tourism in Seinäjoki and South Ostrobothnia is a more significant sector as it is generally thought to be.

Especially event tourists and family travelers come to Seinäjoki and Etelä-Pohjanmaa. Mostly they are people, who use their own car.

Big events and family friendly attractions bring tourists especially to South Ostrobothnia instead of traveling to other regions.

Free time tourism is clearly concentrated on summer season. For the other seasons, more events would be needed. Or another option would be to develop more experience production to attract foreign tourists.

Finnish people often do not know the tourism services in their own region or do not consider them to be interesting. They might think, that it is somehow more glamorous to travel further away. The inhabitants of the region begin to appreciate the supply of their own region not until someone from outside praises it.

Cooperation in the product development and supply should be lifted to a higher level and the resources also in marketing measures should be combined in order to attract more foreign tourists. (Jussila)

The year 2013 was for the tourism in South Ostrobothnia record-breaking when it comes to accommodation. The number of overnight stays grew more than 3% compared to the previous year. The total number of overnight stays was 690 627, which is the record of all times. The amount of overnight stays grew in free time tourism as well as in business travel. 72% of the nights spent in the region were related to free time tourism, while the share of business travel was 25%, and the

remaining 3% was for other purposes, like rehabilitation, for example. The share of summer months (June, July and August) of the nights spent was 47%, but in 2013 they increased the most outside the summer months, namely 77% of the total growth. The share of nights spent by foreign tourists was 5%, of which the share of business travel being 65%. The nights spent by foreign tourists grew by over 20%. The biggest nationalities among the foreign tourists were Russians, Estonians, Swedes, Germans, and Italians. The biggest growth came from Estonia, Italy, Sweden, and Czech Republic. (Etelä-Pohjanmaalla matkailun ennätysvuosi)

4 SWOT-Analysis

4.1 Strengths

4.1.1 Aschaffenburg

The city of Aschaffenburg in Lower Franconia is close to Frankfurt am Main, only approximately 40 kilometers away. It is easy to access, because it is not far away from the Frankfurt international airport. There is a direct train connection from the Airport to Aschaffenburg central railway station. There is another airport, Frankfurt Hahn, which is situated in Lautzenhausen, about 120 kilometers away from Frankfurt. It is not very close to Aschaffenburg, but it is popular because of its cheap flight connections to several European cities.

Aschaffenburg also has an airport in Großostheim, 7 kilometers to the West from the city center. It is operated by a sport aviation club that secondarily provides facilities for public transportation. This is financed partly by small grants from the state of Bavaria, on the other part through the charges of every landing, renting parking spaces and premises for businesses, and provisions from the sales of fuel. Not least through voluntary work of the management and the club members, there is an effective, public airport at the region's disposal, the operation of which costs much less and is more effective than airports that are operated by municipalities. (Flugplatz Aschaffenburg-Großostheim)

Aschaffenburg is a small but lively city, very beautiful with its old buildings, castles, and parks, and the view to the river Main. It is very different from Frankfurt am Main: It can attract tourists who visit Frankfurt also to Aschaffenburg in order to see different German cities on the same trip. The compact city center is suitable for a short trip, because the most important attractions can be reached on foot. There are also lots of museums and other attractions for a longer stay. Aschaffenburg has a tourist information center next to the castle, Schloss Johannisburg, which is one of the most important tourist attractions. The tourist information center has materials

also in English, which is an advantage for the international tourists who do not speak German. Many cultural events are arranged in the city. They are interesting for tourist from other countries and regions as well as for the people living in the Lower Franconia region.

Aschaffenburg has a university of applied sciences, which also on its behalf contributes to the internationalization of the city. Internationalization brings along improvement of services in English.

Miltenberg brings its own extra to the tourism of the region, because it attracts great amounts of tourist because of its well preserved old town and beautiful landscapes. Because it is easy to access by train from Aschaffenburg, it is a suitable destination to visit only as a one day trip. It offers nice restaurants, cafes, shopping opportunities and foot paths with historical places though, enough for an overnight stay as well.

4.1.2 Seinäjoki

Seinäjoki is situated in Western Finland, about 400 km north from Helsinki. It is a railway hub, which has originally brought Seinäjoki among the remarkable cities of West Finland. It takes less than three hours by train from Helsinki to Seinäjoki at its best. It is also possible to fly in 45 minutes, because Seinäjoki has its own airport in Rengonharju. Seinäjoki is growing fast, in 2013 its population is 60 307 inhabitants, in 2012 it was 59 556, and in the beginning of 2000's only about 50 000. So there has been 17 % growth in about ten years. (Seinäjoen kaupunki – Väestö)

In Finland everybody has to learn English at school, and because TV-programs are subtitled instead of dubbing, people hear English and learn to understand it. Therefore, it is not a problem for the tourists in Finland, if they do not speak Finnish. This is an advantage, when comparing to Aschaffenburg. In Germany, in small cities, it is sometimes difficult to get service in English.

Seinäjoki has a university of applied sciences, which practices active international cooperation in terms of student and personnel exchange. There are degree programs conducted totally in English, which means, that every year new students

from all over the world come to live in Seinäjoki three to four years. This already brings internationalization closer to the everyday life of people working in the service sector. More and more English is heard on the streets of the city.

One of the most important tourist attractions in Seinäjoki is the Aalto Center, the buildings designed by the famous architect Alvar Aalto. The church Lakeuden Risti, City Hall, Theater and the newly built library, which is designed in the style of Alvar Aalto, form an interesting entity in the city.

4.2 Weaknesses

4.2.1 Aschaffenburg

One of the weaknesses of the tourism industry in Aschaffenburg to be mentioned is that not very much English is spoken in Aschaffenburg. It is therefore more difficult for international tourists without German skills to get everything done. Also the menus in restaurants are often only in German, so the tourist should have at least elementary German skills to be able to understand enough.

Another weakness is that there is not very much cheap accommodation available in the city center. If one takes a look at international online booking services, there are mostly hotels and no hostels or guesthouses available. (Hotels.com, Booking.com) Even though all the hotels may not be luxury hotels with an expensive price, compared to Würzburg, for example, Aschaffenburg does not offer many options for low budget tourists. For pack backer tourists, for example students, it would be important to get affordable accommodation, because they do not often have lots of money available. However, they are an essential tourist group; they bring money to the destinations they travel to. There are affordable guest houses at least outside the city, but they are not easy to find online if only English language is used when searching.

4.2.2 Seinäjoki

Seinäjoki as a city is quite new. Before the year 1960 it was a rural community. Therefore most buildings are new, there is not much left from the old times. The city has grown around the railway hub. Seinäjoki does not have such old cultural heritage as Aschaffenburg. For that reason it does not offer so much for culture enthusiasts as a city of the same size in Germany. Finland is a large country by land area, but small in the number of inhabitants – therefore distances between cities are long. This requires the tourists to want to make an effort to get to the city – they do not just happen to end up to Seinäjoki as easily as tourists traveling through Germany may happen to stay in Aschaffenburg on their way somewhere else.

The weather in Finland in general is also for Seinäjoki a weakness. Summer is so short, that the summer activities make sense only for such a short period of time that it does not bring very much income for the whole year. That is why other kinds of tourist attractions have to be developed – such that offer tourists interesting activities regardless of the weather.

4.3 Opportunities

4.3.1 Aschaffenburg

Aschaffenburg could attract more visitors who also want to see the Spessart Mountains and probably go for some outdoor activities there. Aschaffenburg could offer city tourist packages combined with activities in the region. This would profit Aschaffenburg as well as the region around it. There are opportunities for cycling in the mountain landscapes. It is possible to follow marked routes especially planned for cycling. One of these routes, on the way of which Aschaffenburg lies, is the River Main Cycle Route, which starts in Bayreuth and ends in Wiesbaden. This route has been awarded 5 stars by the German Cyclists' Association. (Kulturstadt Aschaffenburg) Also horseback riding opportunities in the nature are good in the region. One example of these is the Waldmichelbacher Hof, situated in valley in

Spessart, which offers horseback wandering in the forests of Spessart. It's not only a horse riding place, though, but a family-run enterprise which offers accommodation and has a restaurant specialized in local food. (Waldmichelbacher Hof)

One opportunity for the tourism of the Aschaffenburg region is small local restaurants. They are attractive, but often the tourist does not access them very easily, because he or she does not know where to find them. The often family-run restaurants do not always have a website, where the tourist could easily find the information before the trip. When staying in a city, the attractions in the center are easier found, but the little restaurants outside the city center, often in the neighboring towns, stay unknown for especially foreign tourist. They are, however, something that a foreign tourist could appreciate. Something, that is typical for this country and region, and not to be found in every big city of the world. Therefore an opportunity for Aschaffenburg's tourism industry could be to combine vacation in the city to a visit to the neighboring towns, where lots of these beautiful and atmospheric little restaurants with excellent home-made food are located.

When it comes to accommodation, environmental friendliness could be mentioned in the booking services. Regionality is often promoted in gastronomy but environmental aspects are not always taken into consideration.

4.3.2 Seinäjoki

One aspect of the landscape that has not yet been fully utilized is the river that flows through the city. In Aschaffenburg, the banks of the river Main have nice footpaths and long cycling routes to other cities like Frankfurt am Main and Miltenberg. The city center in Seinäjoki would be more attractive, if the river banks would be made the same way accessible for tourists and inhabitants of the city.

Seinäjoki is a fast growing city. More people need more services, which requires more workforce, and more jobs are offered. Better services are an advantage in the sense of tourism as well. In spite of that, one does not have to go far away from the

city center in order to see the countryside – it is there right outside the city, because Finland is so sparsely populated. This could be utilized more than it is being at the moment. Especially foreign tourists have not seen similar landscapes as in South Ostrobothnia, because elsewhere there are buildings closer to each other and the topography is not so smooth.

The view over the expanses of South Ostrobothnia is unique – not everywhere in the world or in Finland can one see dozens of kilometers ahead without obstacles on the way. The wide fields, through which the many rivers flow, form the typical landscape of South Ostrobothnia. Generally, Finland is known for its thousands of lakes, but in this area, instead of lakes there are many rivers. These landscapes cannot be seen directly in the city center; that is why tourism to the surrounding regions should be better promoted. There people can see the real “heart of Finland” better than in the city center. Especially because Seinäjoki has not been a town for a long time, the original roots of the people lie in the communities in the region. South Ostrobothnia is also known for its high level of entrepreneurship, in business as well as in the general life attitude of its people. A couple of examples of the entrepreneurial attitude are an artificial lake and a mountain in Seinäjoki! (Etelä-Pohjanmaan matkailu)

Also in the case of Seinäjoki, in addition to promoting regionality, improving and marketing environmental friendliness in tourism operations would be worth the effort.

4.4 Threats

4.4.1 Aschaffenburg

Frankfurt as a metropolis with its 700 000 inhabitants and various sights may keep the tourists from coming to Aschaffenburg, because there is so much to see and experience in such a big city. (Frankfurt.de) In addition, Würzburg 80 kilometers in the east may also attract more tourists than Aschaffenburg, because it is bigger and

still a little bit of the same style as Aschaffenburg – old, beautiful buildings, castle and the river Main view.

In Germany, there are lots of cities of the same size as Aschaffenburg, with beautiful architecture and landscapes, this is what might attract tourists elsewhere instead of Aschaffenburg. For example, domestic tourists could travel to that kind of a city closer to their home, and do not necessarily think about going to Aschaffenburg because they do not know what special characteristics it would have that the other cities do not.

Aschaffenburg is not yet much internationalized, at least compared to bigger cities in Germany. There are people of many different nationalities living in the city, though, but still, services offered in English are not easy to get everywhere. People are mostly expected to speak German, even though they are just visiting the city. The language factor is a weakness but also a threat for Aschaffenburg, because other German cities offering services in English and practicing larger scale international marketing may be more likely to be chosen as a travel destination.

4.4.2 Seinäjoki

Also in the case of Seinäjoki, one threat are other cities that may keep foreign tourist from coming to Seinäjoki. There are other interesting cities in the southern Finland closer to each other than Seinäjoki is from the other cities in its region. Many tourists want to visit the capital city, Helsinki, which is situated in the south coast. That is why most people fly to Helsinki international airport, visit Helsinki and probably some other cities in the neighborhood. On the other hand, many people travel to Finland to see Lapland, and do not get to see the regions between Helsinki and Lapland.

It is a threat that there are so few flight connections to and from Seinäjoki, even though it has an airport. At the moment, the Airport Rengonharju offers flights only once – twice a month, and they are holiday flights. There are no regular flights available. (Seinäjoen lentoasema)

It is often mentioned when marketing Seinäjoki and South Ostrobothnia, that Seinäjoki has an airport. It is, however, misleading, because people normally assume that there are flights flown to and from an airport every day. There does not have to be flights offered everywhere in the world from such a small airport, but it would be reasonable to have regular traffic in order to maintain credibility.

For example, Vaasa, a city of 65 000 inhabitants in the West Coast of Finland, 76 km away from Seinäjoki, has an airport that has regular traffic and connecting flights from Helsinki to cities abroad. (Vaasa.fi, Reittikartta.info)

Vaasa is also a much older, traditional city by the sea, maybe not as lively as Seinäjoki, but easier to access, at least for foreign tourists. There are also ferry connections from Vaasa to Sweden, which attracts Swedish tourists to Finland. They might stay only one day and stay in Vaasa instead of traveling further away to get to Seinäjoki. 24% of the inhabitants of Vaasa speak Swedish as their mother tongue. (Vaasa.fi)

That is why Vaasa offers its services normally both in Finnish and Swedish. Therefore it is particularly easy for Swedish people to communicate in Vaasa, they can do it in their own language.

For domestic tourists, bigger cities are often more interesting as travel destinations. Many Finns know the main cities better than the smaller cities not more than 100 kilometers away from their home. Regional traveling should be promoted – it is ecological and would bring knowledge and appreciation of the own home region. A threat here is the climate. In the summer months, also the smaller towns and villages have nice places to visit, countryside tourism shows its beauty, and traveling by car is easy because there is no snow and it does not get dark at all. Especially in the winter, however, only the bigger cities offer enough to see, because they have indoor activities. Another aspect is winter tourism, mostly in Lapland, in the skiing centers and other winter sport areas. Not very often does it make sense to visit the small, comfortable summer attractions in the other seasons.

5 Indirect and Induced Effects of Tourism on Regional Development

In general, the effects of tourism are “the changes in sales, income, and employment in a region resulting from tourism activity” (Stynes). *Direct effects* of tourism, like the spending of tourists in the form of hotel nights, gastronomy services, transportation, and shopping, are easy to measure. Indirect and induced effects, on their behalf, are not, because it can in many cases be controversial, what is actually caused by tourism. *Indirect effects* of tourism are production changes caused by the spending of tourists. *Induced effects* are “the changes in economic activity resulting from household spending and of income earned directly or indirectly as a result of tourism spending”. (Stynes)

Tourism brings new jobs to the region. In some regions, like Miltenberg, this is extremely remarkable because of the big number of tourists in relation to the number of inhabitants of the town. Miltenberg has about 200 000 day visitors and 64 000 overnight stays a year. (Zukunft Miltenberg. Integriertes städtebauliches Entwicklungskonzept)

Therefore, for Miltenberg, tourism has a major effect on the income, jobs the development of the economy of the town. For example, more shopping opportunities are offered and succeed because of the great number of visitors in the town. Also food production in the region profits from the bigger demand in the restaurants.

One example is the oldest guest-house in Germany, Gasthaus zum Riesen, which was originally founded in the 12th century. It places value on the quality and regionality of its dishes and beverages. Its beer is produced in its own brewery and wine comes from local wine growers. (Gasthaus zum Riesen)

6 Results

In order to use this analysis to develop the tourism industry in Aschaffenburg and Seinäjoki, it has to be evaluated, how the weaknesses could be reduced and the threats avoided, the strengths built up and the opportunities utilized.

6.1 The Language Factor

In the case of Aschaffenburg, to some extent the weaknesses could be reduced by adding English menus in restaurants and creating web pages for accommodation possibilities written also in English. In Seinäjoki, this is not so much of a problem, also the smaller accommodation opportunities have web pages in English. Because everyone in Finland has to learn English in the school, getting service in English is not that difficult even in smaller towns than it is in Germany. Still many Finnish websites have only limited contents available in English, so this could still be improved.

6.2 Infrastructure and Accessibility

The threats are not so easy to remove or very much avoided, because they are mostly the cities that are not likely to quickly change their qualities. However, they can be better competed with, if the strengths and opportunities are improved.

6.2.1 Aschaffenburg

One of the strengths of Aschaffenburg is the location, but the good traffic connections could still be improved. The proximity of the international airport is a great advantage, the ICE train connection is fast and comfortable, and the long distance train station is directly next to the Terminal 1. The regional railway station is a little bit further away. There are also regional train connections to Aschaffenburg, but mostly with a change at the Frankfurt main railway station.

For the backpackers, arriving to Aschaffenburg could be made easier than it is now. There is no direct connection from the Frankfurt Hahn Airport to Aschaffenburg: First one has to go to Frankfurt by the airport shuttle, and then take a train to Aschaffenburg. There is an airport shuttle to Köln, for example, even though it is about 180 kilometers away from Lautzenhausen. (Bohr Omnibusse) A direct bus connection to Aschaffenburg could be established, then it would be easier for tourist using the cheap flight connections to arrive in Aschaffenburg in a reasonable time.

The possibility for opening flight connections directly to the Großostheim airport would bring tourists practically to Aschaffenburg. It is, however, not necessarily profitable enough, because the Frankfurt International Airport is so close to Aschaffenburg, and the train connections are good.

6.2.2 Seinäjoki

Seinäjoki should find sponsors for the airport in order to establish regular air traffic. It has been tried already but the traffic has not been profitable and they have quit it. The European Union offers state aid to small airports but the state of Finland should see Rengonharju Airport worth the investment in order to get the aid to Seinäjoki.

“Start-up aid granted to airlines operating from regional airports is a way of attracting airlines to new destinations. Operating aid of this kind is justifiable, temporarily, only in the case of small airports that do not yet have the critical mass needed to reach break-even point. In addition, the aid must provide airlines with the necessary incentive to create new routes or new schedules operated from the regional airports in question.” (Guidelines on State Aid for Developing Regional Airports)

The European Commission has released their definitions of policy of the air traffic state aids. Direct operation aids are going to be run down in a 10 years' transition period. However, the plan does not concern the smallest airports. According to Joaquin Almunia, competition commissioner of the EC, some airports play an important role in connecting European areas but they are too small to make their operations profitable. That is why the ceasing of the direct operation aids does not

concern the airports that have less than 700 000 passengers a year. The European Commission is going to consider the situation of the small airports again in five years. The investment aids for airports are scaled according to the amounts of passengers. The airports that have over 5 million passengers a year, are not considered to need aids. In Finland, only Helsinki-Vantaa airport belongs to this category. (EU ei ole puuttumassa pienten lentokenttien tukiin)

Unfortunately, Seinäjoki is not essential for connecting Europe. Therefore, the state is not likely to spend the EU aid on Rengonharju airport, and other sources of finance would have to be found. One option would be an airline company investing in small airports, a company that offers affordable prices in exchange for flights to airports outside the main air traffic cities. For example, Bremen has become a popular tourist attraction for Finns who fly from Tampere with the cheap flights from Tampere. They would not necessarily travel to Bremen or even to Germany, if it was not for the cheap flights. This idea could also work for Seinäjoki. In order to establish such regular flight traffic, a survey would have to be conducted at first in order to find out if there is interest and which would be the airports, from where the flights to Seinäjoki would be.

6.3 Improving Services

In the case of Aschaffenburg, the earlier mentioned tourist packages could be sold in the tourist information center and at the railway station, as well as in hotels. The packages could include for example guided tours to the castle and other important attractions, a bus ride to the towns in the region, where the tourists could see more than only the Aschaffenburg city center. For example, there is a castle in Mespelbrunn, which is about 20 kilometers away from Aschaffenburg in the Spessart Valley. Nowadays the Renaissance castle has a café and can be rented for weddings. The castle is historically remarkable and an interesting sight, but it is not very easily found by tourists, because it is not in a big city and it has web pages only in German. (Schloss Mespelbrunn)

Seinäjoki already offers such packages for groups, where tourists can see and get to know the Ostrobothnian region. On the website of Etelä-Pohjanmaan Matkailu, the Tourism of South Ostrobothnia, the information on the attractions and packages is offered partly in English, but not everything – this should still be improved. Additionally, when it comes to direct customer service, emphasizing politeness and friendliness would not harm anyone – the direct, Finnish way of communication, particularly characteristic for South Ostrobothnia, might sometimes feel rude to foreigners. Intercultural communication skills of employees in the field of tourism are important; understanding not only foreign languages but also other cultures is an advantage when creating successful services.

6.4 Marketing

Marketing, especially international marketing both of Aschaffenburg and Seinäjoki and the regions should be developed. The cities could join the European Cities Marketing network, a non-profit association which aims at improving the competitiveness and performance of the leading European cities.

How European Cities Marketing could help Aschaffenburg and Seinäjoki would be, for example, destination marketing, networking on a European basis and selective pan-European marketing initiatives and e-commerce. None of the cities are likely to be accepted as a full member, because as quite small cities they do not fulfill all the criteria. Full members are official tourism industry organizations and are elected to the Board. Associate and affiliate members do not have so much power, but they can also join the projects and activities. That would suit Aschaffenburg and Seinäjoki if they would not be accepted as full members. (Criteria. European Cities Marketing)

Aschaffenburg is already marketing itself to be known among the region and other regions as well, but international marketing has not been very much on the surface. The city marketing emphasizes that Aschaffenburg, with its strengths to be developed even further, will be an adorable city worth living for its inhabitants, visitors and companies also in the future.

Seinäjoki on its behalf is also known on the national level, but internationally it is still unknown.

6.5 Regional Cooperation

In both cases the surrounding regions are not so much utilized for tourism as they could be. This could be one aspect to be developed – regional cooperation would bring new opportunities for the tourism of Aschaffenburg and Seinäjoki. When business organizations have come to the conclusion that they could get better results through cooperation, strategic alliances and joint ventures come into question. In many cases, cooperation could bring more than take. One example of this is the case of Hilton Hotels Corporation and Ladbroke PLC. They had both the right to operate the hotels named Hilton. This did not make sense for the hotel guests, it caused only confusion when booking accommodation. This is why the two companies decided to create a strategic alliance that profits both companies. (Morrison et al. 1999, 220)

Especially in Finland, improving and increasing cooperation makes sense, because the tourism operators are so small and relatively unknown. In a country as sparsely populated as Finland, cooperation may be practically more difficult than in Germany, for example, where the distances are short and the cooperating organizations are more easily understood as one unit. Nevertheless, Internet and different forms of Social Media as a part of people's everyday life make it easier to cooperate and network.

Seinäjoki is already marketing the region of South Ostrobothnia quite efficiently. The website of Seinäjoki links to the website of Etelä-Pohjanmaan Matkailu Oy, the Tourism of South Ostrobothnia Ltd. for its tourism related information. Aschaffenburg markets itself more as a city than a region.

Especially Aschaffenburg and Miltenberg could increase their cooperation. They are their own, separate towns, not directly neighboring each other, but they could profit from cooperation. They would not have to see each other as competitors.

6.6 Characteristics of the Cities and Regions

Aschaffenburg is a much older city than Seinäjoki, with more cultural and historical attractions. Seinäjoki and its region have their opportunity in utilizing the unique landscapes. Seinäjoki does not have to be just like the central European cities in order to attract tourists. Actually, that would not help a lot, because to Seinäjoki or Finland in general, one has to travel longer from the most corners of the world. That is why Seinäjoki and South Ostrobothnia can use their own, characteristic features, make them better accessible to tourists and promote itself in a more efficient way.

Aschaffenburg has its advantages in its relatively small size, but despite of that, its many different cultural, historical and natural aspects are all in the same small city and region. It does not take long to get from one place to another, because the distances are shorter than in a bigger city.

For Aschaffenburg, it is easier to utilize the summer season because summer is longer and more likely to be warm than Seinäjoki. That is why it is not as important for Aschaffenburg to develop the other seasons' tourism as it is for Seinäjoki in order to grow the number of incoming tourists. If in South Ostrobothnia, the main tourism season is from June to August, it is exactly the half of the main tourism season of Lower Franconia. Therefore, it is easy to see why it is important for Finland to create more touristic activities that are not dependent on the weather.

6.7 Environmental Friendliness

A recent trend in tourism is environmental friendliness, and so-called eco-tourism has gained ground. The preservation of natural resources is one of the biggest challenges for tourism these days.

University of Helsinki has done a research about the importance of environmentally friendly ways of operation of the accommodation services offered in Finland. About half of the answerers were from South Ostrobothnia. 50.4% of the total number of answerers said that they are ready to pay 15% more of a countryside

accommodation alternative of two otherwise similar ones, if they know that the entrepreneur strives for actively developing their operation to be more environmentally friendly. 69.8% supposed that environmental issues at a countryside tourist attraction are appropriately taken care of, if they were not separately mentioned anywhere. (Kotimaan matkailijoiden suhtautuminen ympäristöystävällisiin maaseutumatkailutuotteisiin)

It would be useful to conduct this kind of a research regionally in South Ostrobothnia and Lower Franconia in order to get information on the attitudes of tourists. If a major part of the tourists coming to the regions would react positively to environmentally friendly tourism even if they had to pay more, it would make sense to build new accommodation and gastronomy businesses. This is not only good in the ecological sense but would also bring advantages economically, if people are ecologically friendly enough to appreciate and search for this kind of services. Environmental awareness could be used as a means of marketing. Hotels, for example, could market themselves as “green” on the booking sites on the Internet. Tourists could start to choose their accommodation based on that.

7 Conclusion

Based on the SWOT analysis, it can be seen that even though Aschaffenburg and Seinäjoki are different cities in different regions and countries, they could profit from partly similar improvements regarding their tourism industry. Improving infrastructure makes it easier for tourists to access the cities and especially the regions around them that still are underestimated when discussing the tourism potential of the cities.

Improving services and offering them more and more also in English would bring great advantages when competing against other regions. Increasing international marketing would make the cities known abroad. Regional cooperation is the way of enhancing the efficiency of marketing and arranging new activities. Taking environmental aspects into consideration when developing marketing strategies reports of following global trends in tourism and using them might lead to attracting new types of tourists as well.

More research would have to be done in order to clarify which of the suggested development ideas could be implemented. Many of the ideas require remarkable financing, which may be the obstacle for the implementation. Finding sponsors is often the stumbling block but hopefully the economy of the European Union will recover soon and more resources for tourism and economy research would be available.

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