

**M.Sc. Programme  
“Management of Protected Areas”**

**Professional Park Ranger Service in Austria**

**Steps towards an integral job description**

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**Klagenfurt, July 15th, 2008**

**Citation : HARTMANN, M. (2008): Professional Park Ranger Service in Austria.  
Steps towards an integral job description. Thesis, Klagenfurt, xxx p.**

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## Acknowledgement

Particularly I want to thank **Martin Šolar**, Triglav National Park, **Michael Jungmeier**, E.C.O. Klagenfurt and **Michael Getzner**, University Klagenfurt, for their assistance and supervision.

This Master Thesis was also elaborated with the help of many colleagues, who I want to thank for their help and support.

**140 anonymous colleagues** from Austrian National Parks

**Mathias Kuhn**, Donauauen National Park

**Christian Übl**, Thayatal National Park

**Angelika Stückler**, Kalkalpen National Park

**Ferdinand Rieder**, Hohe Tauern National Park

**Harald Grabenhofer**, Neusiedlersee/Seewinkel National Park

**Michael Kroiss**, Neusiedlersee/Seewinkel National Park

**Werner Franek**, Gesaeuse National Park

**Lisbeth Zechner**, Gesaeuse National Park

**Meldra Langenfelde**, Gauja National Park

**Viktoria Hasler**, Lebensministerium

My special thanks go to **Petra Sterl**, Gesaeuse National Park, for her assistance with the statistical analysis, and

**Kerstin Hammer**, for her love, help, support and appreciation during the whole course.

I also want to thank my parents, **Gertraude and Hermann Hartmann**, my sister and my brother-in-law, **Andrea and Günter Domian** and my friends for their great support and patience during the last two years.

I want to devote this thesis to my son, **Florian Brandstätter**, who is the most wonderful (Junior) Ranger in the world.

# **1. Summary**

## **1.1. Introduction**

Besides numerous technical innovations and possibilities in the area of knowledge-communication in museums, exhibitions and sanctuaries, in future high value will be detached to direct communication between visitors and guardians in National Parks. A factor of success, which positively operates the sector of operational balance sheet as well as the education-system, is the personal, human component within information management – at qualitative premium implementation. Visitor, who get informed about complex topics and characteristics in a good and fascinating way, who are friendly welcomed and guided, are usually happy to return and refer this special idea of nature conservation effectively to other people.

Compared to this, the current situation as well as the official status of Besucherbetreuer, Ranger, etc. in Austrian National Parks is more than unsatisfying. The study in hand is aimed at investigation of a comprehensive current data collection of working conditions, training contents, personal ideas and a good deal more of National Park staff and at presentation of a status quo of training guidelines of particular administrations.

This documents may provide a basis for further discussions and successful developments up to a job descriptions “National Park Ranger in Österreich” and uniform training standards.

## **1.2. Methods**

Necessary data were collected by the means of questionnaires, which were sent to all persons, engaged in visitor support in Austrian National Parks. Appropriate addresses were allocated by particular officers of education from National Park administrations. All returned questionnaires were anonymously processed and analysed with a statistical program. It was repeatedly reminded to deliver the

questionnaires, so that at least the rate of return was pleasing high with 50%. Additionally these data were compared with a comparable study from the year 1997. At the same time interviews with particular persons, who are responsible for visitor service in National Park administrations were carried out and data concerning the current training standard were collected.

Complementary an intensive literature study about this issue was carried out and comparable job descriptions and training examples in other countries was surveyed.

### **1.3. Results**

In comparison with 1997 distinct changes in the social structure of National Park staff, higher average age, higher woman rate, higher professional qualifications, lower regional relatedness and more intensive rate of side jobs are important points that should be mentioned as result.

There is still a great willingness for basic- and further training, even if the effective service frequency often bears no relation to the necessary input. The level of existing trainings is extremely high and often exceeds, relating to hours and content, those of comparable jobs in the nature-pedagogic area.

Functions of National Park Rangers are still comprehensive and diverse and do not limit to simple visitor support. This circumstance should be sufficiently considered when thinking about the issue “job description” and “uniform education criteria”.

There is a very clear an evenly distributed picture over all Parks concerning the main target group in visitor support: school classes of all age brackets, a circumstance that is reflected in methodical trainings and offered programs of each National Park.

The individual experience and personal competency of each National Park Ranger is a very valuable resource and should be integrated in future basic- and further training courses.

The interest and willingness to improve oneself within experience exchange and co-operation in national and international associations is still very high.

The establishment of a common job description and Austria-wide uniform training standards is a prior desire of both the concerned Rangers and responsible persons in National Park administrations. Generally a broad consensus dominates about obvious advantages, which would be provided by these models: quality assurance at guided tours, image benefit for National Park Rangers face-to-face with visitors and locals, establishment of an identity due to a distinct term and description, and clear competency as well.

But ensuring independency of each National Park in further regional-specific trainings and presentations outwardly is still an actual want.



## 2. Introduction

### 2.1. *Preface - About the Master Thesis*

Thousands of people visit Austrians National Parks each day. National Park Rangers are usually the first and often the only representatives of the Park to come into direct contact with visitors. As such they are the “human face” of the Protected Area. Well-organised services of skilled and motivated Rangers are the best guarantee for both adequate protection of nature and satisfied, well-informed visitors (Bibelriether 1997). In Austria there are different circumstances in which Park Ranger services function. Six National Parks have six different internal education programmes for their own staff, varying in time, contents and qualification. Otherwise the tasks and duties of the Ranger just as the competencies are total diverse in the particular National Parks.

**The objectives of the thesis should contain:**

- ✓ A detailed database of existing training and development procedures amongst the Ranger Services in Austria National Parks
- ✓ Establish a database of existing standards, career development, entry qualifications and working conditions in Ranger services throughout Austria. This should be done by questionnaires with responsible people and staff members
- ✓ To provide basic data for the development for an Austrian Ranger Award Scheme, including a model for standardisation of Ranger training across Austria.

### **3. Professional Park Ranger Service in Austria**

#### **3.1. *Current situation***

Day after day tens of thousands experience the fascination of pristine nature in on of more than 4000 National Parks worldwide. Initially primarily founded with attention on conservation of natural ecosystems or individual species of animals and plants, these areas increasingly fulfil important socioeconomic aims as well, for instance by providing educational- and recreational facilities or regional development chances for adjacent hinterland. The possibility to find silence and relaxation amidst an impressive landscape, as well as the knowledge transfer about specials of natural functions and processes are thereby the prior motivation for the visit of a particular sanctuary. Usually Nationalpark Rangers are the first and also often the only staff of the N.P. administration, with whom you mingle with as a visitor. They represent in one person as a “human countenance” of the park both, the securing of keeping corresponding laws and the contact point for information supply, exciting communicating activities and last but not least help in case of unexpected incidents or emergency situations. Hence, well trained, motivated Rangers are the guarantor to achieve the purposes of active, serious nature conservation and satisfied, well informed visitors too.

At the moment a great range in the face of the situation of the “National Park Ranger”, National Park carer” or “head of expeditions” prevails. Apart from different employment relationships, which base partly on the variety of the compulsory framework, exist only a vague agreement on a minimum standard of the training of idem staff. The quite dedicated effort of the single National Park administrations, to ensure these persons an optimal, on the specific National Park fitted training, leads nevertheless to a very individual qualification of a small group – and without a realistic perspective for an Austria-wide acceptance of a corresponding job outline. If you combine all “freelancers”, “persons with contracts for their services” or “new self employees” of all National parks you will get a number of persons, which could make a further regulation of this job with advantage for all participants necessary.

Separated into single National Park administrations, probably these challenges will be unperceived on long run.

Keep in mind that for visitors of regional National Parks the key to success is our „staff in the area“, which manifests itself in sensitisation for conservation efforts and fantastic impressions and experiences during a conducted excursion. You should be aware of this engagement and idealistic attitude when you visualise and consider the success story of our National Parks. Furthermore you shouldn't forget that the likewise important job of the management and the scientific functions is not noticed in an appropriate intensity by visitors or is even in hiding.

The advantages of an even job outline – under which name so ever – as well as an even instruction and further training are obvious. It contains a clear and comprehensive description and definition, which would be helpful in respect of activities in other areas (e.g. NATURA 2000-areas), it offers a definition and clarification of compulsory frameworks (no random assessment of the activities through partly overwhelmed advocates of public authorities), the qualitative equality of the training by common and unified criteria orientated courses and seminars, as far as the contents are valid for all parks (with a considerable potential for synergies and economic advantages), a gentrified image towards the public, visitors and ecopolitical actors, a correct and exactly defined differentiation towards the confusing number of “similar” jobs like forest pedagogics, nature guides, etc., the easier realisation of development funds, and last but not least a better intercommunication in the international environment would be a possible and desirable result.

The extent of the tasks from the classic “guiding activities” to fields like area control, natural space inventory, visitor infrastructure and much else, would combined with a flexible employment model (e.g. ajar on different tourism jobs) result in a highly attractive whole year job outline. Without to ask for the moon: it's obvious that the recent frameworks in the different National Park administrations don't or just partly fit these ideas – besides financial aspect first of all organisational questions have to be figured out. That those challenges can not be figured out overnight and only with common efforts is unopposed. Nevertheless we must not loose sight of the needs of our staff. At the moment the typical “job model” of a freelancer National Park Ranger is subject to strong seasonal variations. A nearly complete workload during the visitor

intensive summer months is followed by a mostly “winter depression”. It’s only few possible to cushion these “hard times” by other more or less equal tasks (like as ski teacher). The reluctance long-term perspective leads mainly to the loss of highly qualified, engaged staff, as soon as a secure employment appears for them. For many personal conversations I know, that most of our Ranger-colleagues wanted this function mainly for idealistic reasons and they are with the heart really in it – in future our effort to establish the long-termed and qualitative job outline “National Park Ranger” should apply just to this persons.

### **3.2.     *Advantages of an integral job description „Nationalpark Ranger“***

- ✓ **Clearly and integrative designation (identity and image) – not only for National Parks useful (NATURA 2000, etc.)**
- ✓ **Definition and clarification of the legal framework**
- ✓ **Quality assurance by an equal Ranger training course**
- ✓ **A better image about locals, visitors and environmental policy**
- ✓ **Well-defined limit against similar professions**
- ✓ **Allocation of furtherance**
- ✓ **Nationwide and international exchange**

As in most European countries the situation of National Park Rangers and the education in Austrian National Parks corresponds to the particular genesis, development phase, personal configuration and financial strength as well as the regional and local situation. Such pragmatic and often also organic „development resolutions“, which-not by planning, but by development - cater to the particular situation, offer definitely advantages, but also some disadvantages. National Parks are those national protected areas with the second highest conservation category.

The requirements to those people in National Parks, who shall communicate the signification and aims, potentials and boundaries in the National Park both to locals and other visitor groups, are multifaceted and demanding and often also divergent. This is true not only “on paper” but also in their work routine.

Due to different requirements and expectations (from the nature conservation policy, National Park administration, local population, tourism and the visitors by themselves) National Park Rangers often come into conflicts not only with foreign expectations, but also with their own expectation/view of the job and diverse inherent necessity.

For the persons concerned are positive to the establishment of a job outline, reveals strongly their need.



**Picture 1** Usually Nationalpark Rangers are the first and also often the only staff of the N.P. administration, with whom you mingle with as a visitor.

## 4. National Parks in Austria

National parks take a special place in nature conservation affairs. They are not only of importance for Austria but also of interest internationally. So far six of the ecologically most valuable regions of Austria have been declared national parks. They cover 2,350 km<sup>2</sup> or about 3% of the national territory.

### 4.1. Definition

The World Conservation Union IUCN defines a national park (under Protected Area Management Category II) as a "protected area managed mainly for ecosystem protection and recreation".

This means that a national park must be open to the public unlike wilderness areas or strict nature reserves, for instance, that are in Protected Area Management Category I. Protection of ecosystems includes the protection of species and the conservation of genetic diversity. The protected ecosystems in the national parks shall be preserved in their natural state and possibly not be exposed to human intervention. However, this claim is the cause of many problems related with the establishment of national parks. The "exclusion of human intervention" means that uses such as hunting, agriculture, forestry, fishery and certain tourist activities need to be reduced.

In addition to the two primary goals mentioned above there are four secondary goals, namely: "scientific research, education, protection of wilderness, and protection of certain natural/cultural features". The IUCN definition of Category II - National Parks reads as follows:

**Category II: National park: protected area managed mainly for ecosystem protection and recreation** – natural area of land and/or sea designated to (a) protect the ecological integrity of one or more ecosystems for present and future generations, (b) exclude exploitation or occupation inimical to the purposes of designation of the area and (c) provide a foundation for spiritual, scientific, educational, recreational and visitor opportunities, all of which must be environmentally and culturally compatible ([www.nationalparks.or.at](http://www.nationalparks.or.at) 2008) .





Picture 2 National Parks in Austria 2008, Source: [www.nationalparksaustria.at](http://www.nationalparksaustria.at)

## 4.2. Legal Basis

The agreements as per Art. 15a of the B-VG define the cornerstones for the establishment and management of each national park: area, purpose, administration, tasks, funding and possible advisory boards or curatories. The detailed national park legislation and the national park ordinances (management plans) are issued by the Provinces.

### 4.2.1. Organisation and Administration

A fund-type solution has been found for the first national park (Hohe Tauern), whereas the second one (Neusiedlersee-Seewinkel) is a public corporation. For the following national parks (Donauauen, Kalkalpen, Thayatal, Gesäuse) non-profit companies with limited liability have been established. The company contracts have been concluded between the Republic of Austria and the respective Federal Province (Provinces). The Federal Government and the Federal Province (Provinces) each hold 50 % of the shares of these limited liability companies. The organs of the

company are the managing director and the general assembly. There are normally 4 to 6 assembly members representing the Federal Government and the Federal Province (Provinces) on the principle of parity. The position of managing director is advertised publicly. The organisational structures of the two national parks of Hohe Tauern and Neusiedlersee-Seewinkel differ from the national parks that were established afterwards. In the case of the Hohe Tauern NP there are three Provincial funds (Carinthia, Salzburg and the Tyrol) and three separate national park administrations with the “National Park Council” as coordinating body. The Neusiedlersee-Seewinkel NP is a public corporation ([www.nationalparks.or.at](http://www.nationalparks.or.at) 2008).

#### **4.2.2. Visitor Services**

It is a priority for the national park administrations to offer visitors an authentic experience of nature combined with environmental education. Adequate regulations must ensure that mere sports activities are clearly subordinate to these protection goals.

In Austria, national parks have become centres for environmental education. The necessary infrastructure has been created by expanding visitor information and education centres, presenting exhibitions, and establishing theme and education paths, adventure sites, lookouts, research facilities, etc. At the same time, the national parks have trained a number of staff for visitor attendance in order to be able to offer high quality programmes. This high level training for national park guides or “rangers” is provided according to a framework curriculum agreed by all Austrian national parks ([www.nationalparks.or.at](http://www.nationalparks.or.at) 2008).



## 5. Implementation of the study

### 5.1. *The study from 1997 – “Status quo of the education of National Park staff”*

In October 1996 the Federal ministry for environment, youth and family (BMUJF) entrusted ARGE environmental education in the environmental umbrella association ÖGNU with the creation of the study “Status quo of the education of National Park Rangers – conclusions for nationwide uniform basic and further training criteria.

Therefore the initial point was the situation in established and right now existing Austrian National Parks with respect to different types and general frameworks of the Rangers as well as their very irregular concepts – establish, planed or in discussion. The BMUJF (dept. 11/5) had the request to check, if despite all legitimate variety of possibilities and sovereignty of National Parks it is wanted/accepted from persons affected to try for a uniform and respectively resolution in terms of quality management and image building.

This would primarily result in a comparable and respectively uniform basic/further training and so in a clear job outline of National Park Rangers in Austrian National Park as well as in the clarification of the essential general framework.

To set in a first dialogue with all participants, the conference “Education panorama National Park” (BMUJF and ARGE environmental education) was arranged in Matrei in the “Year of National Parks” in May 1996. Although many detailed issues remained certainly open, a general consensus insisted to check the need and potential of a common job outline exactly.

Because of the arranged study a preferably complete complex image of the status quo should be developed.

The synopsis of different perspectives (from the affected Rangers’ on one hand and the National Park administrations’ point of view on the other hand) combined with the situation in comparable jobs and in other European countries, resulted in an almost complete image.

It was not the ambition to supply answers, recipes and concrete concepts, but rather to establish, based on objective key data, a basis for a further decision making and an approach as well as to outline possible trends with the particular advantages and disadvantages.

### **5.1.1. Results 1997**

The establishment of a common job outline, uniform and respectively standards in training with contemporaneous ensuring of the diverseness and autonomy of the National Parks seemed to be a request of all participants.

Not only the high readiness to further training of National Park Rangers, but also the degree of already completed courses (more than 90% of all Rangers have attended further training courses) gave reason to optimism.

The schooling and respectively the job training of Rangers varies heavily, the National Park Administration's demands on Ranger were very high. From most administration's point of view the relatedness to the region and the closeness to the National Park played a major role. The results of the study represent, that these aspects are also greatly given on the part of Rangers.

The identification both with „their“ National Park and the National Park-thought was generally pleasing high for most Rangers – and this despite numerous, avowedly problems, which primarily insisted on utilization conflicts, insufficient appreciation and respectively insufficient acceptance from the locals as well as partly insufficient interest from target groups.

The functions and tasks, which account for the professional every day life of National Park Rangers, were extensive and multifaceted and were not restricted to mere visitor assistance. These tasks were mainly added – but in different extent – by measures of landscape conservation and nature conservation. This circumstance should be considered for a uniform training and respectively later qualification as well as a common job outlines (mainly the job title).

Relative to the main target groups the relatively uniform image of all National Parks was surprising, namely the concentration on school classes (youngsters up to 14 years). Certainly this is reflected in the offer of programs and the methodology.

In the area of adult visitor groups the offer and the demand were described as rather “classic” (information on fauna and flora). Relative to basic- and further training it was to question, if the interest of adults could be resurrected with more innovative offers (and the adequate communication in advance). Especially target group orientated offers (contents, methods) should be a considerable focus in the basic- and further training.

The previous settling of a focus in the particular National Parks has been very different, thus in some National Parks the centre of attention was rather the nature scientific orientation, in others the pedagogic/methodical-didactic orientation.

To complete and relate these likewise necessary areas on each other, certainly may call one of the main challenges of a possibly future basic-and further training.

Specific questions of communication, presentation and conflict regulation should be geared to the named problems (utilization conflicts, disinterest and incomprehension).

Since – due to particular settling of a focus or individual special distinctive talent - there is valuable experience as well as competence for many areas in all National Parks, this should be utilized and integrated in basic- and further training concepts and should not be bought by the use of “external” experts (= user-oriented/ -supported training).

Astonishing in this context – and absolutely to be indicated as a good sign for the existing level –was the great interest and readiness to play with one’s cards close to one’s chest within the framework of an experience exchange.

To cash in on the competence of colleagues in such a way, should be considered in the choice of referees as well as the demonstration guides and the exchange of internships within the scope of the training.

The comparison of the job description and the education situation in other European countries resulted in a very irregular pattern.

## **5.2.      *The study from 2008 - Professional Park Ranger Services in Austria; Steps towards an integral job description***

### **5.2.1.      *Methodology***

Within this master thesis following investigations were carried out:

- ✓ **Questionnaires**
- ✓ **Qualitative interviews**
- ✓ **Study of literature, scripts, etc.**
- ✓ **Additional interviews and “Field work” (Nationalpark administrations, ministries, staff,...)**
- ✓ **Application of still existing concepts (Best Practise)**

The survey of Ranger was done via standardised questionnaires from January to May 2008. The intensive interviews with the officers of education of particular National Park Administration were carried out between December and May 2008. Additionally an intensive literature research to the issue of the paper in hand took place and responsible policy makers in the ministry of live were interviewed.

### **5.2.2.      *Questionnaires***

**Evaluation and analyse of the current education level, the function areas and the needs of National Park Rangers from all Austrian National Parks.**

At the written survey a questionnaire with an explaining cover letter was sent to the respondents per E-Mail and they filled it in and returned it to the sender. If the E-Mail address was not available, they got a printed version per mail inclusive the cover

letter and a post-paid envelope to return it. In many cases this process was supported by an informal mass mail on the part of the particular National Park administration. To develop questions and pre-formulated answers for a standardised questionnaire and to ensure the possibility of comparison at the same time, the questionnaire of a study from the year 1997 was consulted and adapted and additionally updated questions were integrated.

In the questionnaire following data groups were surveyed by means of 56 questions:

- ✓ Social aspects (age, gender, origin, etc.)
- ✓ Employment contract to the particular National Park
- ✓ Employment situation
- ✓ Situation of education
- ✓ Questions about the personal implementation of the visitor assistance
- ✓ Aspects of nature conservation in the private environment
- ✓ Desired basic- and further training scenarios
- ✓ Personal idea about the job description

The questionnaire was checked and revised according to following points (Friedrichs 1990):

**Guideline: *Preferably an up-to-date address index has to be available.*** This was ensured by particular education officers of the single National Park administrations, who provided updated address lists with all leading Rangers.

**Guideline: *The questionnaire has to be clear, short and comprehensible and well arranged.*** This aspect was attained by the revision of the questionnaire from 1997, which structure has been retained for a better comparability. The length at first glance was restricted to an expenditure of time of approximately 15 to 20 minutes for the completion of the form.

**Guideline: *The readiness to answer the questions only depends on the plea to the respondent and on the topic; there is no interviewer to encourage the***

**respondent.** Motivation was given enough, because the topic has been emotionally discussed and demanded since many years within the Austrian „Ranger Family“.

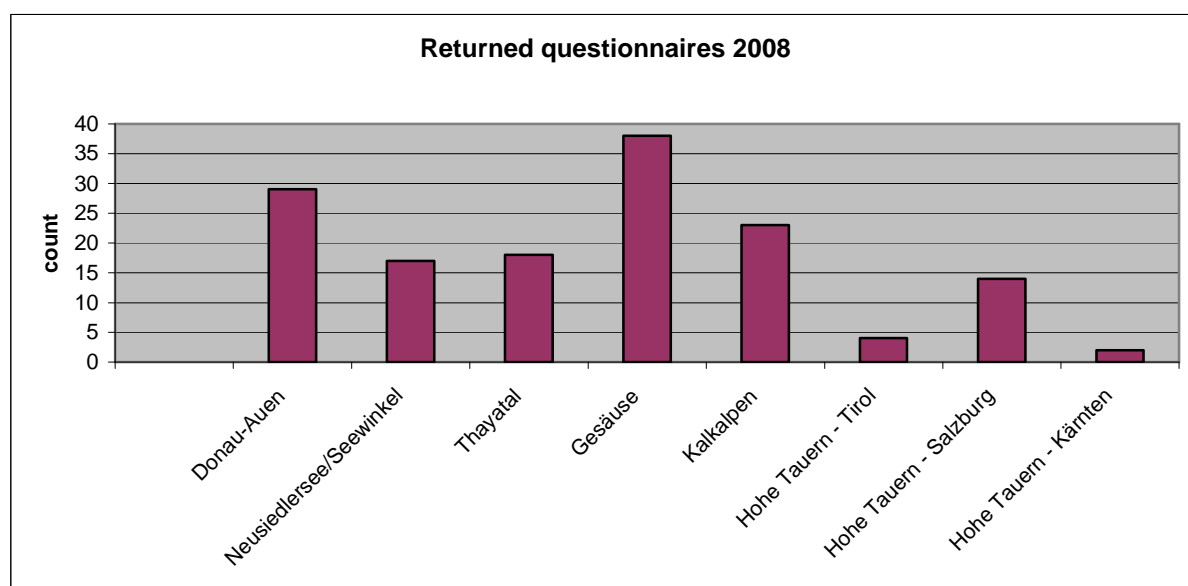
**Guideline: The ability to fill the questionnaire out depends on its comprehensibility, the linguistic capacity as well as on the practice to read and answer such forms** The predominant part of the questions has to be filled in by ticking pre-dominant answers. Only under exceptional circumstances the questions were extended by so called „open questions“, that respondents could add opinions, suggestions or terms.

The analysis of the data was carried out with the statistic program SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences, Version 15.0). Frequency analyses were calculated for the general description. Cross-tabs with chi-square-test were carried out to check connections. The chi-square-test (Bühl and Zöfl 1999) checks the independence of both variables of cross-tabs. The variables are independent, if the observed frequencies are consistent with the expected frequencies.

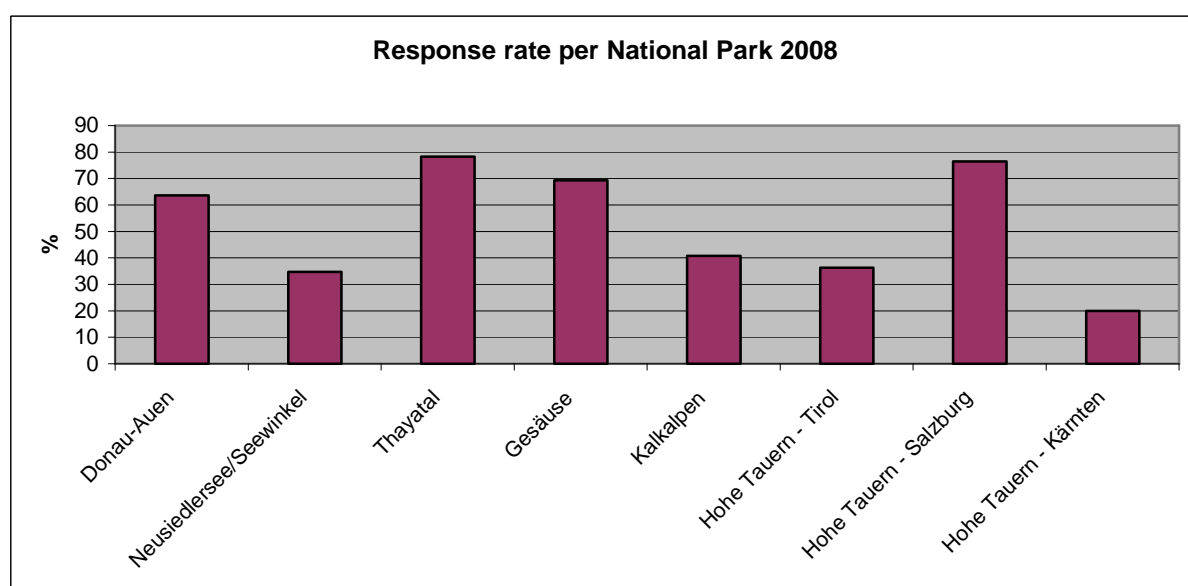
Precondition for this test is, that in less than 20% of the fields expected and observed frequencies <5 occur. The column- and line total has to be always bigger than zero. In the case, that these preconditions were not achieved, it was tried to fulfil the terms by combining of variables.

140 of a total of 260 per E-Mail and mail sent questionnaires, were completed returned, this corresponds a return-rate from 53.8%.

There were 29 completed returned questionnaires more than in 1997, whereas it has to be considered, that in 1997 the distribution took place in fewer National Parks. Likewise, in 1997 there were considerably more different educational institutions entrusted with management functions in existing National Parks than in 2008 (e.g. WWF, Umweltspürnasen, etc.).



**Figure 1** Returned questionnaires 2008, n = 140



**Figure 2** Response rate per national Park 2008, n = 140

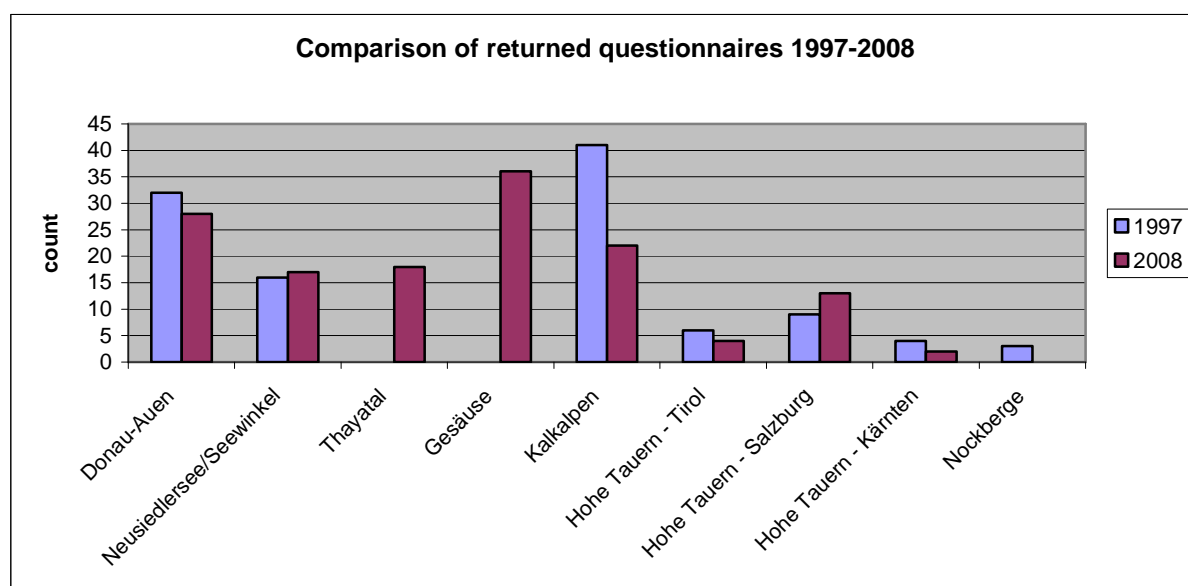


Figure 3 Comparison of returned questionnaires 1997–2008, n(2008) = 140, n(1997) = 111

### 5.2.3. Qualitative Interviews

#### Survey of requirements and basic- and further training on the part of the National Park administration.

There were interviews carried out with all officers of education from the particular National Park administration. Interviews were carried out on the basis of a structured pattern (compendium) and acoustically recorded. Finally all interviews were worked up with the compendium and analysed combined with complementary materials (education concepts, written documents from the National Park administration, etc.). Interview partner in single National Park administrations were:

<b>Donauauen National Park</b>	DI Mathias Kuhn
<b>Thayatal National Park</b>	Christian Übl
<b>Kalkalpen National Park</b>	Mag. Angelika Stückler
<b>Hohe Tauern National Park</b>	Ferdinand Rieder
<b>Neusiedlersee/Seewinkel National Park</b>	DI Harald Grabenhofer, Michael Kroiss
<b>Gesaeuse National Park</b>	<i>Use of existing material from own work</i>



## **Question catalogue for the NP-Administration / persons responsible for basic and further trainings**

Elevation of the requirements as well as the basic- and further training programs for NP Ranger on the parts of the NP-administration: the battery of questions comprehended following issues:

- ✓ Number of so far trained Rangers (12/2007)
- ✓ How many courses up to now?
- ✓ Average number of members?
- ✓ How many Rangers operate at the moment?
- ✓ What admittance criteria / what job profile?
- ✓ Which selection procedures?
- ✓ Are there compulsory / obligatory possibilities for further training?
- ✓ Is there a possibility for specialisation in different areas of studies?
- ✓ Type of training (period, organisation, etc.)?
- ✓ Content of the current training?
- ✓ Is there a curriculum?
- ✓ What emphases?
- ✓ Charge for members a) basic training, b) further training?
- ✓ Is there a NP internal cost account for the a) basic training, b) further training?
- ✓ Financial calculation? Support?
- ✓ Dropout-rate a) during the courses, b) within 1-2 years
- ✓ Which exam modalities?
- ✓ Official term?
- ✓ Which kinds of employment contract do you have (type, number)?
- ✓ What employment intensities?
- ✓ What fees are paid at the moment (daily/hourly rate)?
- ✓ Which visitor programs (Intensity summer, winter)?
- ✓ Main audience?
- ✓ What activities include visitor support?

- ✓ Visitor structure, statistic process?
- ✓ Current problems / advantages?
- ✓ Future prospects?
- ✓ Attitude about a job description?
- ✓ Uniform quality criteria?
- ✓ Benefit of training synergies?
- ✓ How do you classify the acceptance of your work within the locals?
- ✓ How do you classify the visitor's satisfaction with your work?
- ✓ How intensive is the collaboration with the locals?
- ✓ Others?

#### **5.2.4.        *Study of literature***

In the last years comprehensive material to this problem was investigated in connection with my personal professional activity. These efforts were intensified once more and institutional sources like the ministry of life were consulted within the thesis in hand. The attempt to account for all documents adequately would go beyond the scope of this thesis. For this reason the main emphasis are put on the preparation of these data in following areas: on the exemplary identifying of successful international examples to the topic "National Park Ranger"; a short look back at efforts of national and international institutions to achieve a job outline and an uniform basic training; as soon as the attempt to outline a practicable model out of the "Best Practise"-examples at hand for Austria.

## **6. Comparisons with job definitions, education and legal situations in selected European countries**

### **6.1. *Swiss National Park***

Since its foundation in 1914 park wardens have worked in the Swiss National Park (SNP) and it's not possible to imagine them without their presence and activity. The broad area of tasks of park wardens is defined by following purposes of the SNP:

- ✓ . integral conservation of the habitat
- ✓ . investigation of natural processes, fauna and flora
- ✓ . information on nature
- ✓ . recreation for humans in an undisturbed environment

#### **6.1.1. *Area control***

Park warden control the park area relating to human incursion. They rebuke visitors for simple breaches. In the case of grave breaches they initiate by complaint proceedings to a judgement by the police. In the course of this park wardens comply with current laws and regulations.

#### **6.1.2. *Assistance by research tasks***

Because of their knowledge of the area and nature processes, park wardens are integrated in numerous research projects: they record populations of red deer, ibex, chamois, marmot and golden eagle and they take part in capture of wild animals and those marking with individual earmarks or transmitters and the following monitoring. Park wardens collaborate in the resettlement project of bearded vultures in the Alps and they record data about meteorology and vegetation development.

They provide assistance with geological, forest scientific, botanic and hydrologic projects and record special events like windbreaks, avalanche downfalls, floods and erosions in picture and text.

### **6.1.3. Information of visitors**

Park wardens accompany special visitor groups like students, teachers, foresters, and gamekeepers, national and international delegations on excursions. Sometimes they are present to school classes and other park visitors for a short time and stand by for answers. Nature in the SNP offers a maximum of recreation. The conversation with a warden, the answering of a question, the discovery of a plant or an animal with the aid of a park warden has, besides the informative value also a high value of experience.

### **6.1.4. Functions within the business**

The park wardens perform numerous operating tasks. The most important are:

- ✓ Construction and maintenance of trails, bridges, rest areas and information boards, maintenance and renovation of huts
- ✓ Construction of exhibitions in information centres
- ✓ Taxidermy of trophies
- ✓ Controlling of game populations
- ✓ To look for game wounded by traffic or hunters
- ✓ Keeping diary, rarity lists and statistic (today in digital form). Special tasks like night service, border- and hunting control

### **6.1.5. Business organisation**

The eight fulltime park wardens are directly responsible to the head of “business”. The responsibility for the path network, huts, cars, equipment, clothing and the organisation of the entire operational functions as well as basic and further training are incumbent on him.

The SNP is divided into 5 areas of supervision. Two-third of the uniformed and armed service takes place in an assigned regular area, the rest in the remaining park area. A monthly rota manages the services, assignments and special commitments. The numerous overtimes, which arise in summer and autumn, are regulated by

precompensation in the winter-term. Regular reports secure the cooperation and mutual information flow between the head office and park control.

Due to realisation of new building-projects like bridges, information boards and hut chattels in the element-building-system is it possible to prepare the work during winter in the garage. Because of the multifunctional professional orientation of the park wardens all arising practical tasks are done off one's own bat, which pays off by big savings.

#### **6.1.6.        *Basic- and further training***

In their first years of service park wardens attend the intercantonal basic course for gamekeepers (IGW), a two-year-long concentrated training, which takes place in four week-long courses. Thereby topics like wildlife biology, ecology, nature conservation, law, report system, weaponry and dog-training are taught. Each part has to be completed with an exam. The further training is attached to importance. The park wardens educate themselves for instance within road shows like the ZERNEZER NATIONAL PARK DAYS, the series of lectures NATURAMA or the annual federate gamekeeper course.

Further briefings concern the contact with the public, botany, geology, ornithology, first aid, avalanche prevention, weapon handling, computing, report system, laws and regulations. Each year 10 to 12 working days are used for further training. About half of the briefings are given from park own staff.

#### **6.1.7.        *Requirements***

Park wardens have to be physically fit and mountain establishes in summer and winter. Preferably they have completed a mechanical apprenticeship and bring along some years of working experience. They hold the hunting licence and they are able to speak Romanic, German and Italian as well as a bit of French. At the meantime computer practice is a requirement. Park warden should bring along a distinctive sense for nature and natural processes and they have to be able to work in a team and alone, to observe and control watchfully and attentively on their tours and to deal with visitors sociably (Negri 2003).

## **6.2.      *Triglav National Park (Šolar 1997)***

The Triglav National Park in Slovenia was found in 1981 and is one of the oldest National Parks in the Alps. Its boundaries almost entirely correspond with the area of the Julian Alps. The National Park covers an area of 83.807 hectares of which 55.332 hectares are inside the central zone and 28.475 hectares are in the peripheral zone. The highest point is Triglav (2864m), after which the park was named.

### **6.2.1.      *Professional Park Ranger Service***

The Triglav National Park Act (Official Gazette of Republic of Slovenia 17/81) regulates the protection of nature within the park at two levels:

In the central zone, priority is given to the protection of nature, maintaining its pristine condition and values of an unspoilt wilderness. In the peripheral zone the emphasis is on the protection and care of cultural landscape as well as on the promotion of sustainable development.

Articles 12 and 13 of the Act establish a number of restrictions and prohibitions in effect within the park, the enforcement of which is supervised by authorised Triglav National Park Rangers. They are allowed to fine persons on the spot up to the amount of 20,000 Slovene Tolars for transporting hazardous substances across the National Park and for the unauthorised public use of forest roads in the central zone of the park. Legal groundwork for the Professional Ranger Service (PRS) in the Triglav National Park is provided in Article 23 of the TNP Act.

Most of the time a Ranger has to work with people, warning and educating them, explaining natural monuments to them and only occasionally imposing a fine upon them. The detailed specification of work is provided in the annual programme, training and education being the items of special attention.

At the seminar for Rangers, which normally lasts several days and takes place every year in the springtime, Rangers are informed about new issues and given instructions for the coming season. In addition, there are a number of shorter working sessions organised to deal with specific issues. Besides this seminar, the Triglav National Park organises two excursions every year, one of which takes the TNP employees into other protected areas (abroad), and the other shows them around the territory of TNP itself. They pay special attention to the latter excursion, for Rangers are frequently

very familiar with the part of the TNP territory for which they are responsible, but hardly know other parts of the park. It is essential, however, that a National Park Ranger is familiar with other areas of the park as well, because he often provides visitors with information about the entire protected area.

### **6.2.2.            *Organisation of work in Professional Ranger Service***

The professional ranger service in the Triglav National Park is organised to correspond with the specific characteristics of the territory. The head officer of Professional Ranger Services at the TNP Office plans, leads, and co-ordinates the work of Rangers. Hunting-related activities performed by Rangers are the responsibility of a regional co-ordinator, who discusses the work and obligations of workers in the field with the Head Officer of PRS. As for the activities of PRS, the territory of the Triglav National Park is divided geographically into four protection divisions. All divisions consist of protection areas or regions, each of them being the responsibility of one ranger. Quite naturally, areas of Rangers' work intertwine. By order of the head officer of PRS, a ranger may also do his work in the wider territory outside his protection division. The protection area and the so-called Area Ranger are the smallest units in the hierarchical structure of the service. The average size of the protection area is between 4000 and 5000 hectares. The protection division officer heads the protection division. He is at the same time a Ranger in his protection area; Rangers are directly responsible to the division officers, to the head officer of PRS and to the TNP director. The head officer of the Professional Ranger Service in TNP prepares a framework for a monthly plan which serves to remind Rangers of their work. The programme is distributed to division officers, who are responsible for detailed plans of daily work, and to Rangers. On the first working day of the month, a regular working meeting with all four division officers is held at the TNP Office.

At this meeting, they discuss the programme of work for the current month, and go through reports for the previous month. Rangers are obliged to write these reports and submit them to division officers a day before the meeting. At these meetings, current issues are discussed as well, and division officers are brought up to date with all the important activities of the TNP Office. Head officer of PRS keeps in daily

phone contact with division officers and individual rangers and, periodically and on regard, he also co-operates with Rangers in the field.

To summarize all authorised persons: the TNP director is responsible for all fields of work; the head officer manages the professional ranger service (PRS) and the division officer is responsible for co-ordination of all work inside the division.

### **6.2.3.            *Work of professional ranger service***

At present, 19 Rangers are permanently employed in the Triglav National Park to perform care and supervision tasks. Thirteen Rangers combine this task with the duties of gamekeeper, two other Rangers combine their duties with work in the Information Centre in Trenta, and the remaining four Rangers perform primarily supervision activities. Since they do almost all their work outdoors, the TNP Office is obliged to provide them with appropriate equipment for work. The fundamental parts of equipment are the clothes, which can be further divided into working and official clothes (the uniform). The Ranger is obliged to wear the official clothes when performing supervision on duty or working with the visitors of the park. The uniform is equipped with the official badge of PRS, which makes the Ranger clearly recognisable. In addition, the ranger has an official Ranger identity card, with his photo and personal data. Technical equipment includes mountaineering or alpine equipment (ropes, picks, crampons, skis) which is essential for safe movement in the alpine world.

Being a public service, the Professional Ranger Service is an extension of the state, and the authorities of rangers are public. During fieldwork, the ranger service co-operates with the police and inspection services of the TNP Office. Their observations, especially transgressions, are sent to the TNP Office as special reports. These reports are subject to checking, verifying, mutual inspections and subsequent appropriate measures. The TNP Office periodically informs the Rangers in writing about the measures taken with regard to individual transgressions.

The tasks of a National Park Ranger include different types of work which are summarized in the following:

**A. Implementation of nature protection**

**B. Expert work, data collection**

**C. Duties concerning tourism-promoting activities of the park**



## **D. General duties**

## **E. Special working conditions**

### **6.2.4. Volunteer Ranger Service**

The Triglav National Park Act also anticipates the establishment of a Volunteer Ranger Service. A Volunteer Ranger Service is a group of people who, through their professional work (for example, employees of a state forest institution) or as amateurs and recreation enthusiasts, establish a connection with the territory of the national park and have a feeling and understanding for nature conservation. Candidates must pass a special course and exam. Membership in the volunteer ranger service is not permanent. Currently the volunteer professional ranger service of TNP has 43 members. From this labour pool, people for seasonal work in PRS are recruited. All the volunteers are invited to participate in the educational activities of TNP. Their participation is the main purpose of these activities. If these people transfer their knowledge, skills and energy to their acquaintances, colleagues or friends, our primary aim will have been reached.

### **6.3. Bavarian Forest National Park**

The employees of the national park ranger service are primarily professionally qualified, experienced people to whom visitors to the national park can turn.

The rangers provide information to and answer questions from those who are eager to learn more. They also inform inexperienced visitors of the consequences of certain actions; such as, walking on a stretch of sensitive shoreline, or feeding wild animals out of a misguided love and a misunderstanding of the animals' needs.

Other examples of misunderstanding between the aims of the park and the visitors include the following issues: allowing forest roads to become overgrown with plant life and return to their natural state, bark beetles, the dying of forests, and bark damage done by red deer. The rangers are therefore always positioned in those areas where a particularly large number of visitors spend their time, for instance at Lake Rachel, on the Rachel and Lusen mountain peaks, or in the so-called animal outdoor enclosure. By giving polite, professionally sound information - between

70000 and 90 000 times a year - they help our guests understand the special statutory purposes of the national park and accept the national park concept. In these situations, there is no clear difference between the distribution of information and environmental education. Their presence at the national parks' main visitor points and at particularly dangerous spots, which may vary from season to season, enables them to effectively prevent any inappropriate behaviour that might occur.

Many nature lovers are often not aware that their behaviour can pose a danger to nature. Most of them would do anything of their own accord for conservation. They are merely lacking comprehensible, tangible information that they can put into action. What is needed in cases such as these, is not old-style police warnings or admonishments with a raised finger. The national park rangers achieve their aim in most instances by being friendly yet firm and by giving competent information. The ranger's motto is: information and education have priority over prosecution offences. Sixty percent of the visitors take the opportunity to attain advice from our rangers.

### **6.3.1.        *From by-law enforcement to national park service***

From our experience, it is not the on-paper legislation, the amount of advice given to visitors, or the number of warning signs that are the decisive factors for the effectiveness of the regulations and prohibitions. Much more important is the personal representation and enforcement of this legislation in the field. For twenty four-years now, an essential part of this challenge has been taken over by the ranger service in the Bavarian Forest National Park. The ranger service was established in 1974 as the first full-time, professional ranger service in a German preserve to co-operate in the care of visitors and supervision of the park regulations. The work of the "order service", as it was formerly known, is based on the rules concerning forest protection in the Bavarian Forest Law. According to this law, in the Bavarian State Forest it is the task of "policing officers" in the field, and of other people duly authorised by the government, to ensure that the regulations are observed. The 23 members of staff on the national park ranger service are forest protection officials according to a regulation of the Bavarian Forest Act. They basically have the same rights and duties as police officers. Their commissioner is a senior civil servant in the higher technical forest service. He is the forest protection representative by virtue of his position and is also an assistant civil servant to the public prosecutor. The staffs

of the national park ranger service is obliged to prevent, to stop, or to prosecute offences against the regulations, and have the right,

- ✓ **to verify visitor's identity**
- ✓ **to expel people from the park**
- ✓ **to confiscate objects or materials prohibited in the park**

The staffs of the ranger service therefore have executive powers. They abstain from using their authorisation to search people or things in their possession, and from the application of direct force, on principle, because such forceful measures would inevitably have negative effect on the public's acceptance of the ranger service.

Staffs carry no firearms on duty although they are authorised to do so. They are not however allowed to have dogs with them. The national park ranger service does its work essentially on foot in the terrain. The ranger service is divided into three Districts, each in the charge of its own "district ranger", who know their area especially well. The local responsibility is under the jurisdiction of the national park administration. The guidelines and their subsequent amendments for the ranger service cover the tasks, rights, organisation and equipment, including clothing of the rangers national park staff, as well as their qualification requirements.

These guidelines were enacted by the Bavarian State Ministry of Nutrition, Agriculture and Forestry in the year 1989.

### **6.3.2.            *Requirements for a ranger career***

In conjunction with these personality traits, it is necessary to have the following practical attributes: close association with the aims of the national park, deep-rooted knowledge about its objectives and tasks, and knowledge of species and ecological relationships.

Requirements for a ranger career are:

- ✓ **. personal commitment**
- ✓ **. powers of persuasion**

- ✓ . **courtesy and tact**
- ✓ . **friendly and assured appearance . sense of responsibility . willingness to learn**
- ✓ . **sound physical and mental condition**
- ✓ . **approachability and welcoming personality**
- ✓ . **teaching skills . team spirit**
- ✓ . **sense of humour**
- ✓ . **talent for repartee**

### **6.3.3.        *Training and further education***

At the present time, there are no syllabuses, formal education guidelines, or an acknowledged professional profile for rangers, let alone a special institution for the education of such staff. We are mainly responsible for our own training and for the further education of our staff. The new recruit, following a successful application and an interview including presentation of the usual proof of education and of attitude, goes through a period of about half a year of settling into the job. During this time, they are intensively prepared for their tasks. The head of the ranger service is responsible for the education of the staff.

Training takes the form of:

- ✓ **lectures, individual and group discussions, case studies, role-playing and field excursions,**
- ✓ **practical guidance by experienced staff,**
- ✓ **taking part in seminars at the Nature Conservation Academy (ANL) in Laufen, and for those with a sufficient knowledge of English, at the British ranger training centre at Losehill Hall.**

(From: Professional Park Ranger Services, 1997)

## 7. Results of the questionnaire 2008 in comparison with the study from 1997

### 7.1. General and personal data of the National Park Ranger

#### Age distribution

At the date of the survey was the predominant part of National Park Rangers between 25 and 49 years old, with a slight focus on 35 to 39 years old Rangers. Almost 85% of the respondents were younger than 50 years. The shifting of the age groups-affiliation in comparison to 1997 is evidently: at that time 25 to 29 years old Ranger dominated by far.

In 2008 the average age was rounded up to 40 years (39.6) in comparison to 36 years (35.8) in the year 1997.

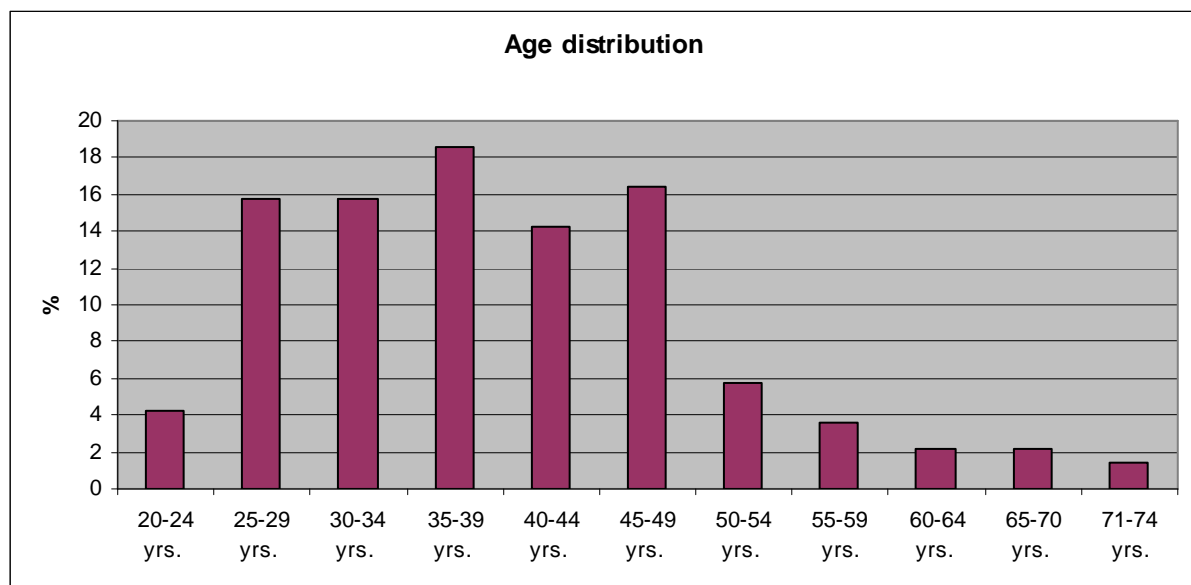
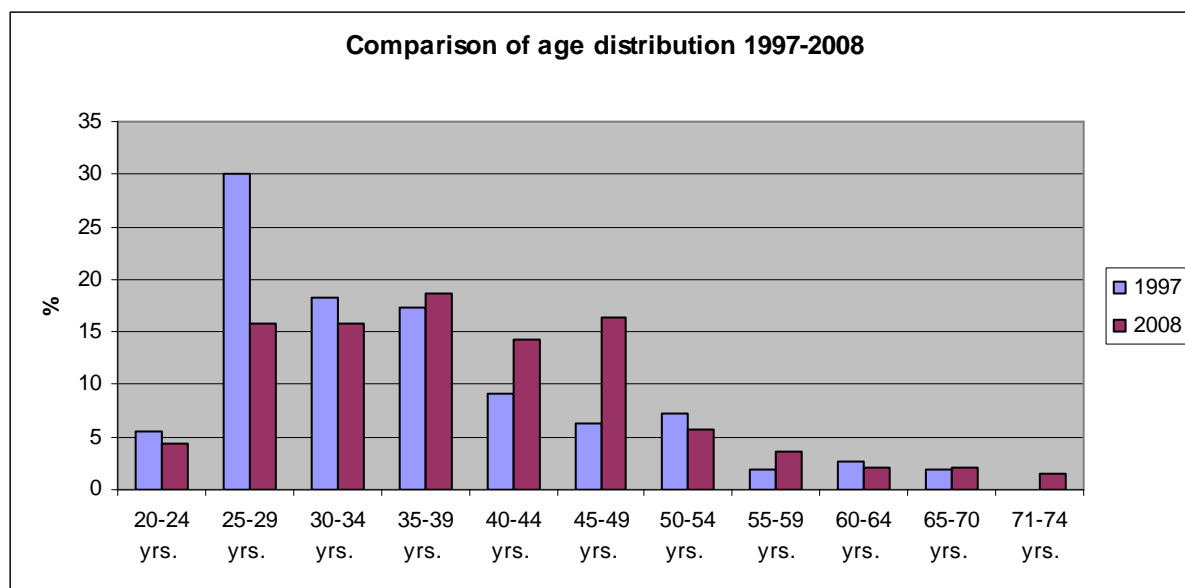
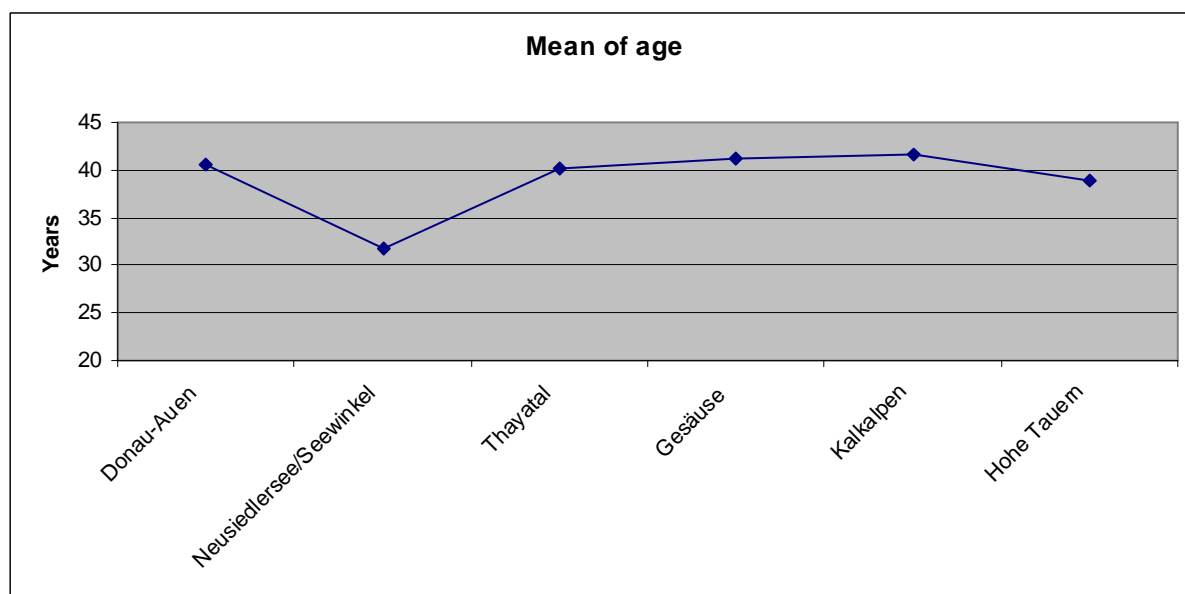


Figure 4 Age distribution 2008, n = 140



**Figure 5** Comparison of age distribution 1997-2008, n(2008) = 140, n(1997) = 111



**Figure 6** Mean of age 2008, n = 140

In 2008 the mean of age for all National Park Rangers is 39,6 years. According to the single National Parks it reaches from the very young people from Neusiedlersee/Seewinkel National Park with 31,8 years to “the oldest” – Kalkalpen National Park with 41,6 years. The mean of age for women is 35,4 years, those for men is 42,8 years.

## Gender

The distribution between the sexes among Austrian National Park Rangers is nearly balanced at the time of survey. 45% women are in opposition to 55% male colleagues. There is a conspicuous change too, in comparison to 1997: 11 years earlier less than 25% of the respondents were female.

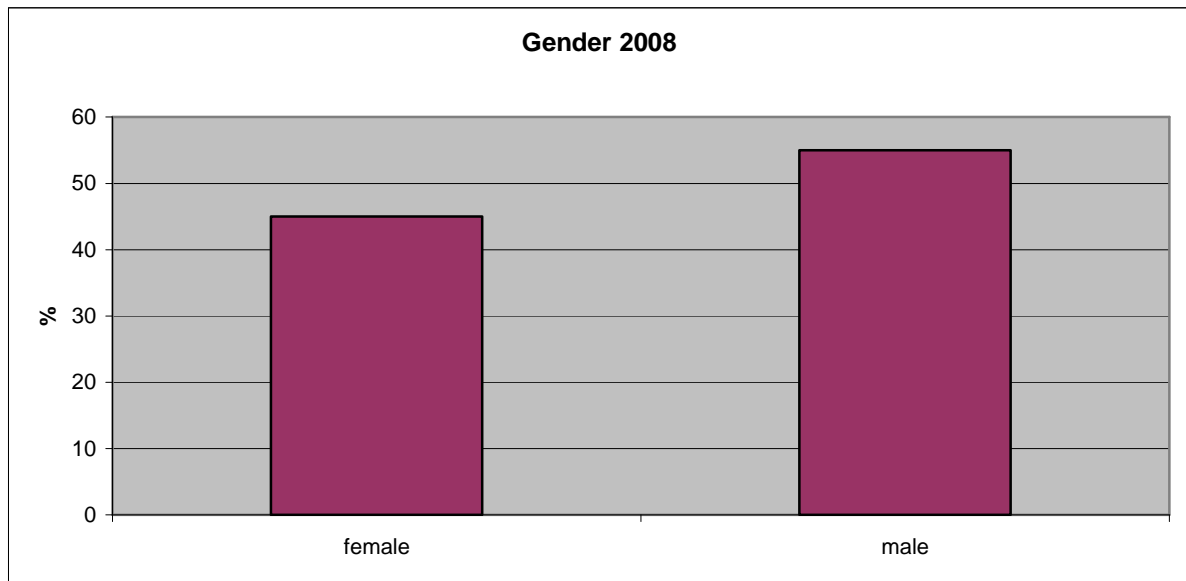


Figure 7 Gender 2008, n = 139

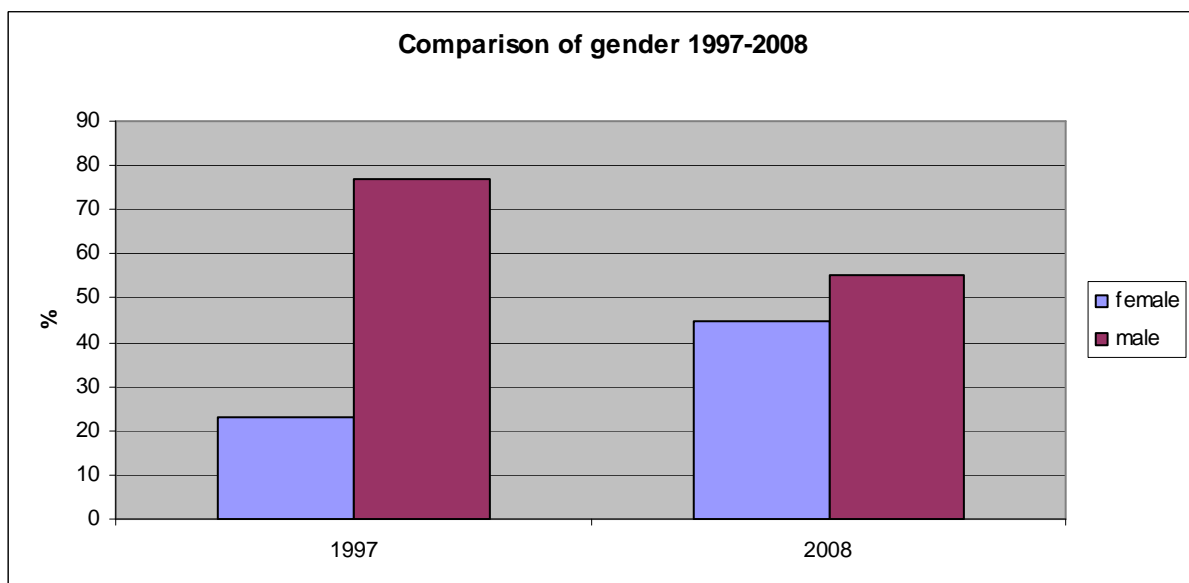
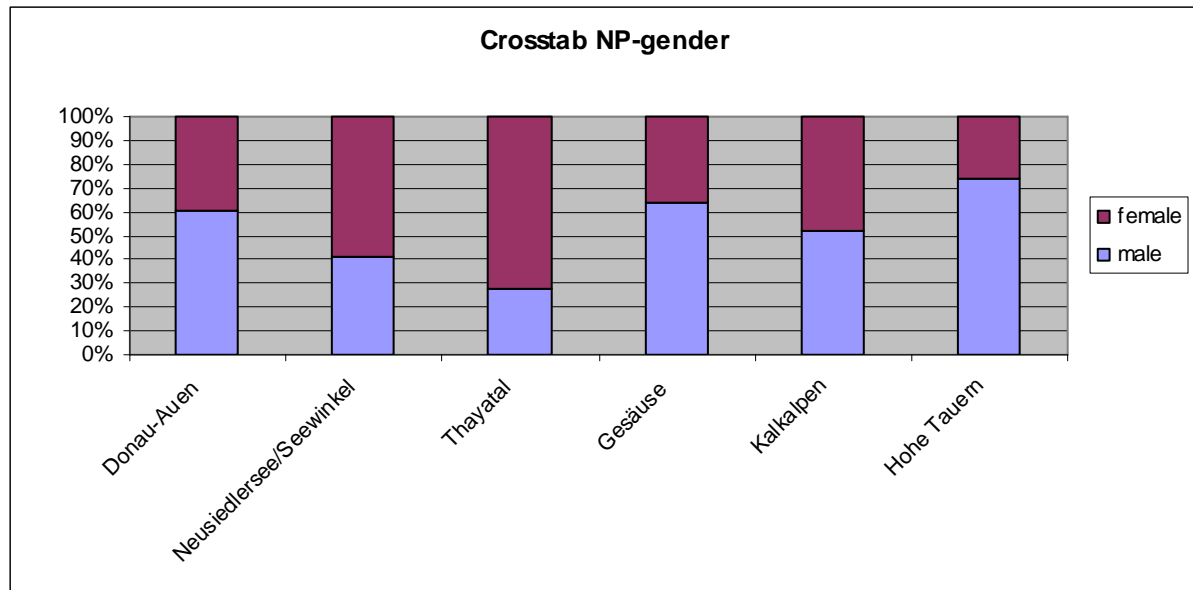


Figure 8 Comparison of gender 1997-2008, n(2008) = 139, n(1997) = 111



**Figure 9** Crosstab National Park – Gender 2008, n = 139

## Martial status

Nearly three-fourths of all respondents states to be married or in a long-term relationship. Unfortunately this question was not analysed in 1997, for which reason comparative data are missing.

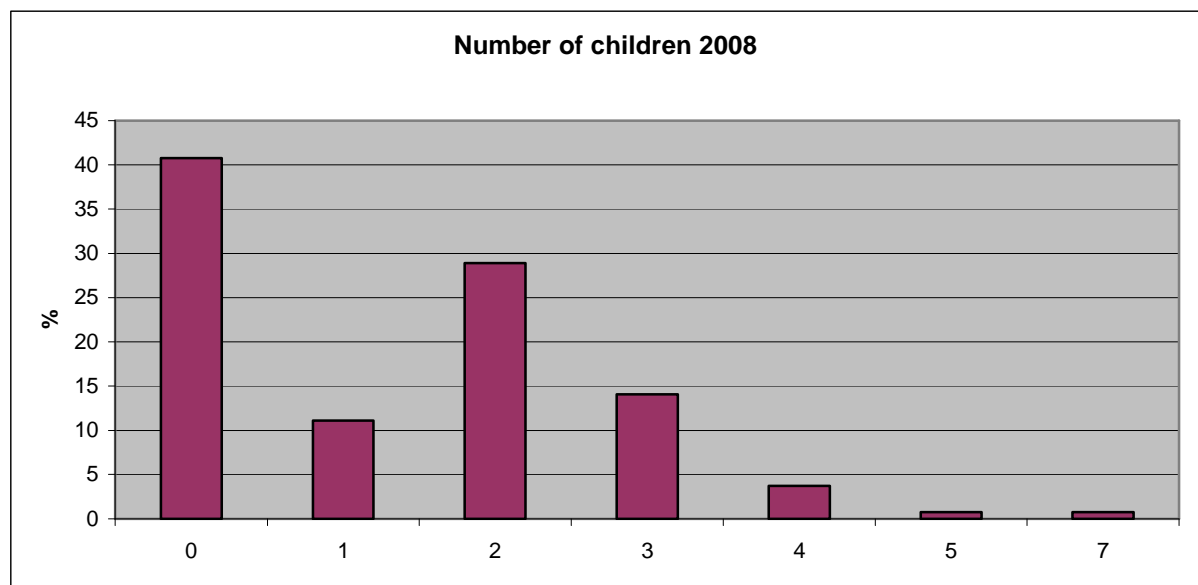


**Figure 10** Martial status 2008, n = 139



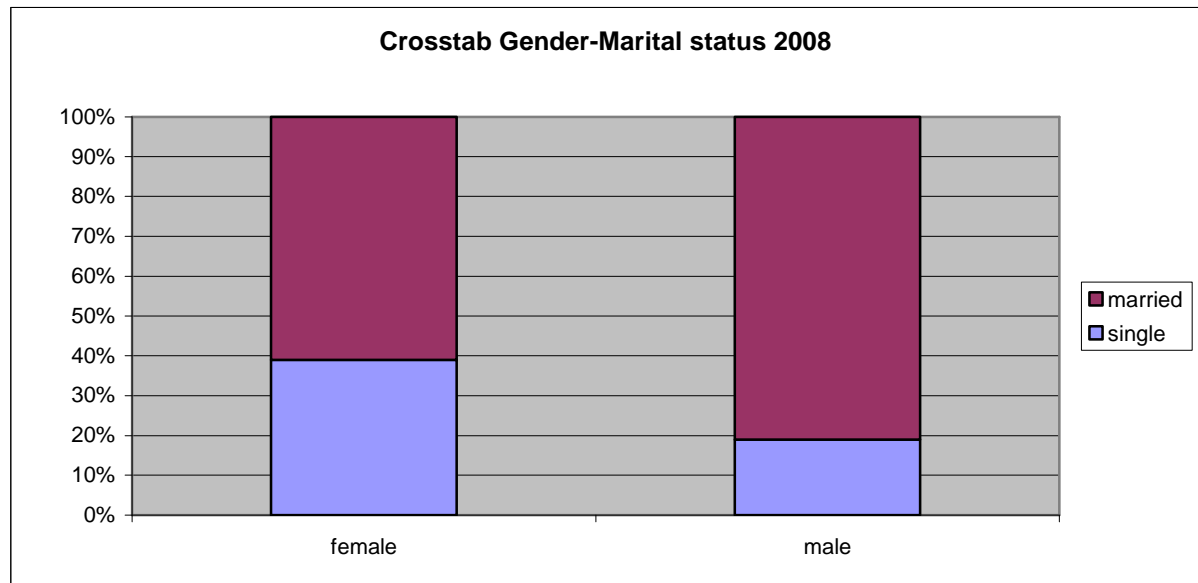
## Number of children

More than the half of all National Park Rangers stated to be happy parents. It's an interesting detail that with almost 30% families with two children predominate twice as much those with one child. The average number of children of those National Park Rangers with children is 2.36 and thus clearly higher than the comparative Austrian average of 1.79 ([www.statistik.at](http://www.statistik.at)).



**Figure 11**      **Number of children 2008, n = 135**

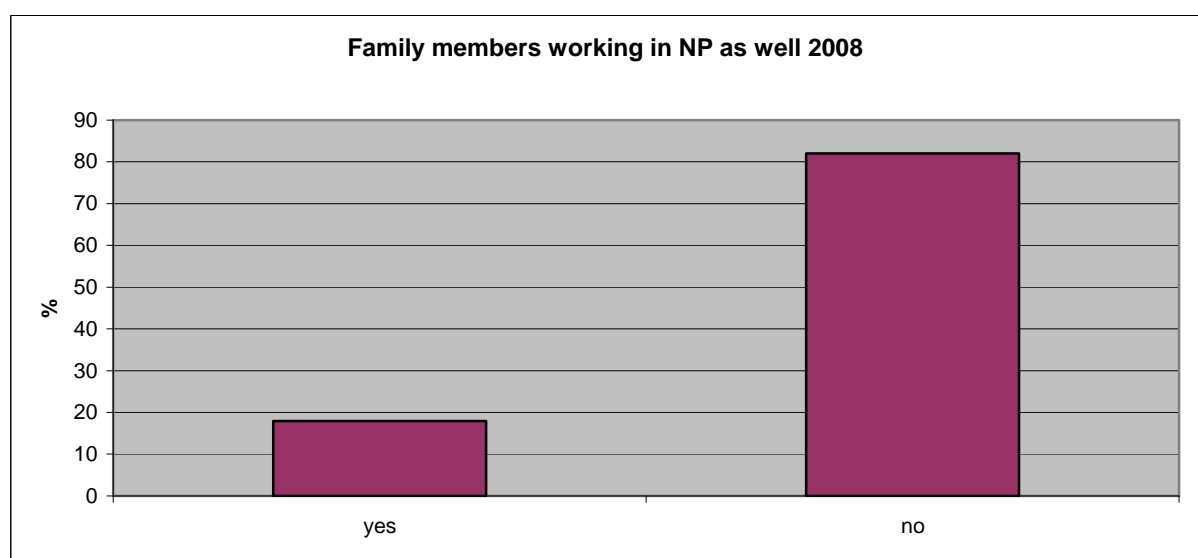
There is no secure connection between the pairs of variety age/sex and respectively age/martial status. But there is a statistically secured connection among surveyed National Park Rangers between sex and martial status: Proportionally there are twice as much female persons single and respectively without a fix partner than their male colleagues.



**Figure 12** Crosstab Gender – Martial status 2008, n = 139, p < 0,05

### Family members within the National Park administration

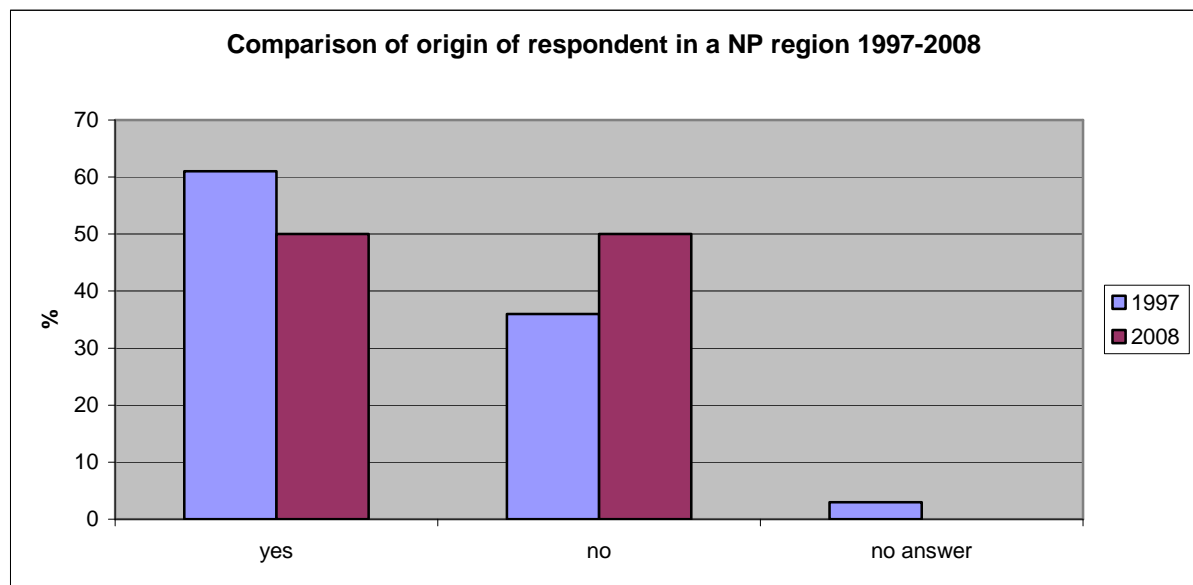
Less than one-fifth of the asked persons stated, that other family members are occupied at the particular National Park administration, too. However, relating to other employment contracts is it a comparatively high value, which expresses the idealistic relatedness within many families.



**Figure 13** Family members working in the National Park as well 2008, n = 136

## Origin in a National Park region

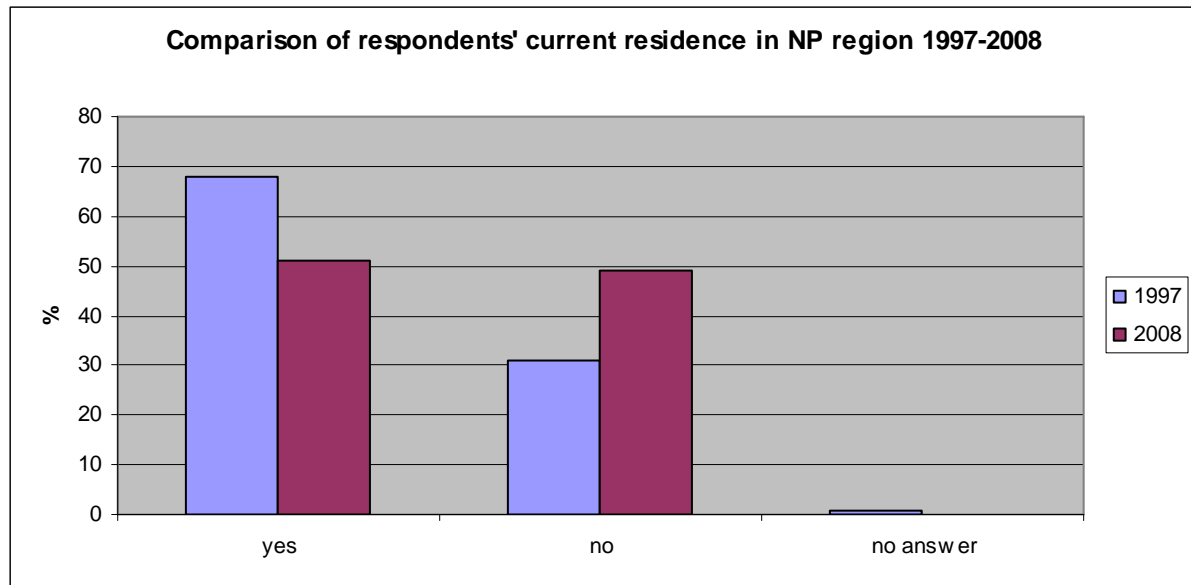
Respectively exactly the half of all in the year 2008 asked National Park Ranger stated to origin from the National Park region and respectively from outwards. Hence, a clear shifting is the result in comparison to 1997: at that time the two-thirds stated to origin from the National Park region. The consideration of the older study, that in some administrations the regional origin is a pre-requisite for engagement, could not be confirmed in 2008.



**Figure 14** Comparison of origin of respondent in National Park region 1997-2008,  $n(2008) = 140$ ,  $n(1997) = 111$

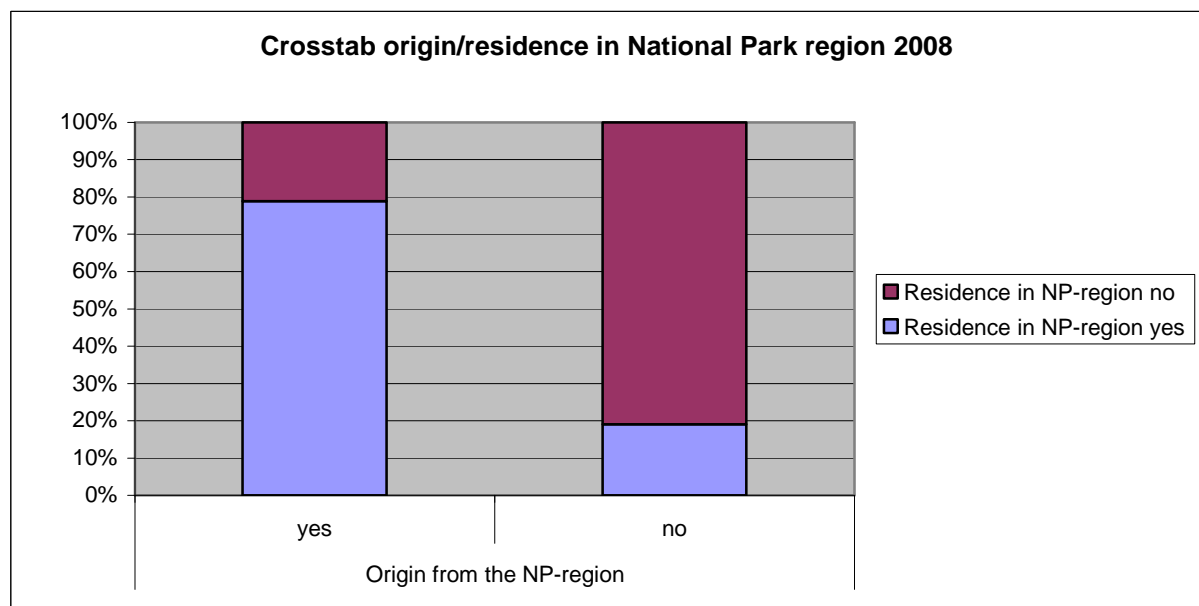
## Current residence

A similar picture conveyed the question about the current residence too. Whereas in 1997 more than two-thirds stated that their residence is “within the National Park region”, already more than the half of all respondents commutes to work from outside of the National Park region in 2008.



**Figure 15** Comparison of respondents' current residence in National Park region 1997-2008,  $n(2008) = 139$ ,  $n(1997) = 111$

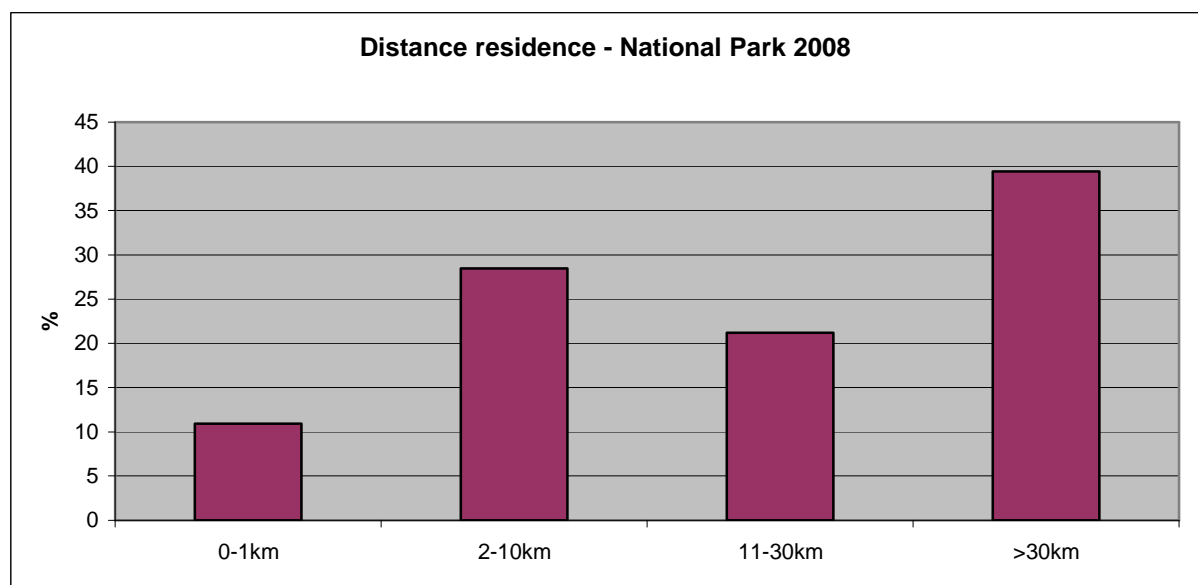
The Qui-Quadrante-test of „native/not native“ in the National Park region and „resident/not resident“ in the National Park region is interesting. In the process emerged, that the number of immigrated as well as migrated persons among the asked National Park Rangers is nearly the same; a trend, whereupon National Parks in their existing form are regarded as net-migration areas, is consequently statistically secured not given.



**Figure 16** Crosstab origin/residence in National Park region 2008,  $n = 139$ ,  $p < 0,05$

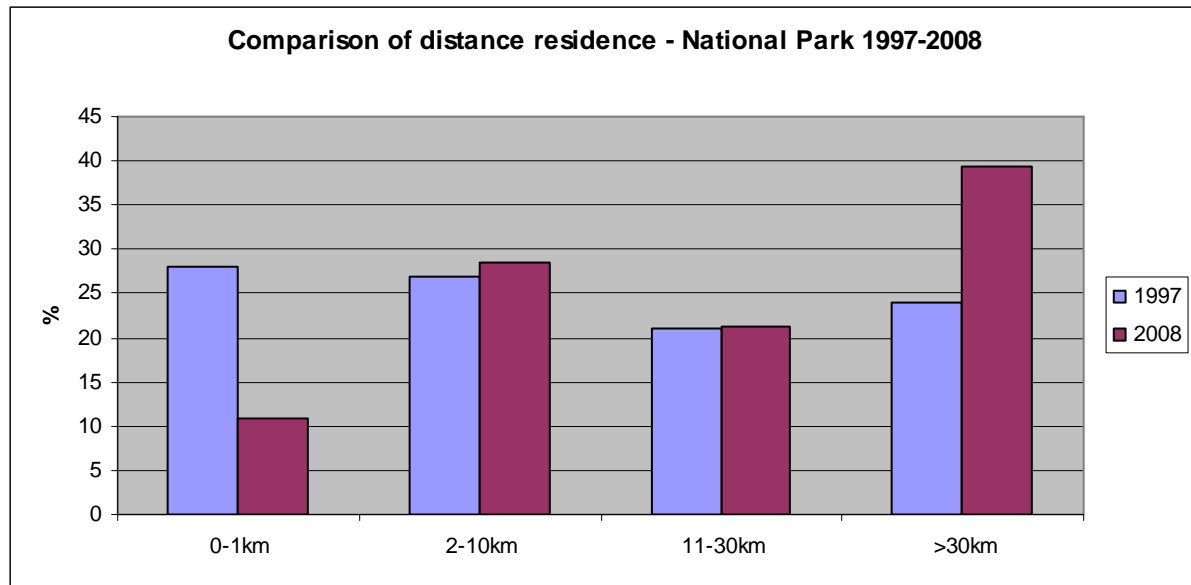
## Distance residence – National Park

From 11% of the persons, who answered this question, the workplace is located in the proximate place of residence, 28% are living at most 10 kilometres away from the workplace, 21% stated to commute up to 30 kilometres and 39% !!! are living more than 30 kilometres away from their workplace. In comparison to 1997 great shifting within the distance “0-1km” and “>30km” can be found. Whilst in 1997 almost one-third was practically able to walk to work, only one-tenth is able to do this in 2008. In contrast the part of those, who has to cover more than 30 kilometres to arrive at work, has been nearly reduplicated.

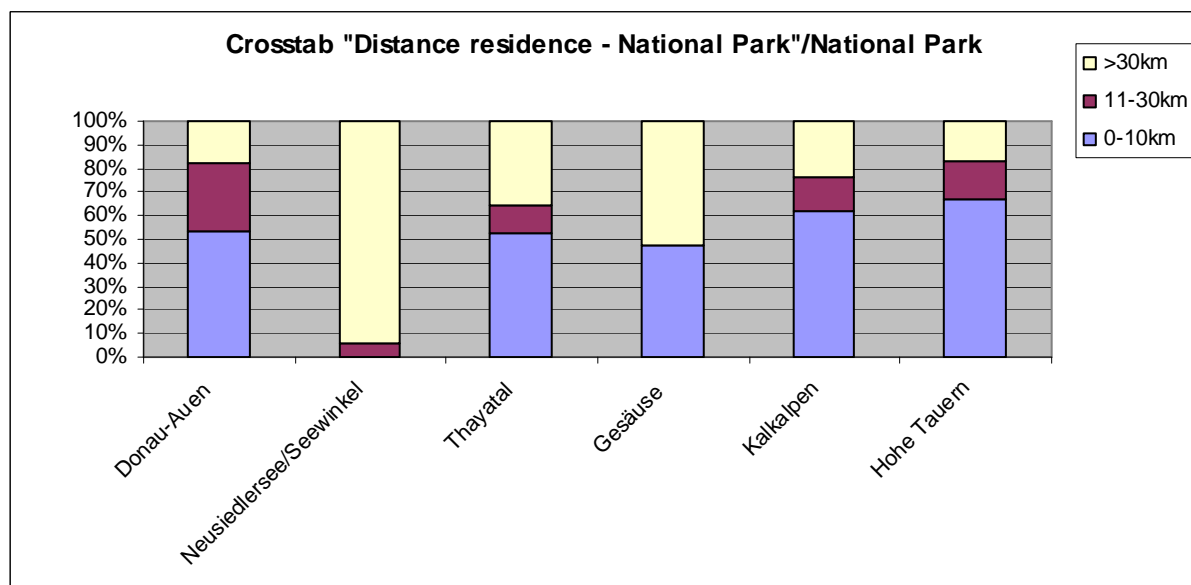


**Figure 17** Distance residence – National Park 2008, n = 137

When doing a comparative Qui-Quadrate-test between the respondent's distance of residence to the National Park and the particular “National Park-affiliation”, an interesting pattern results: while the distance categories “0-10km” and “>10km” are filled in a similar way in nearly all National Parks, the National Park Neusiedlersee/Seewinkel stands out clearly. Nearly all Ranger of this National Park commute more than 30 kilometres to their office.



**Figure 18** Comparison of distance residence – National Park 1997-2008, n(2008 = 137), n(1997 = 101)

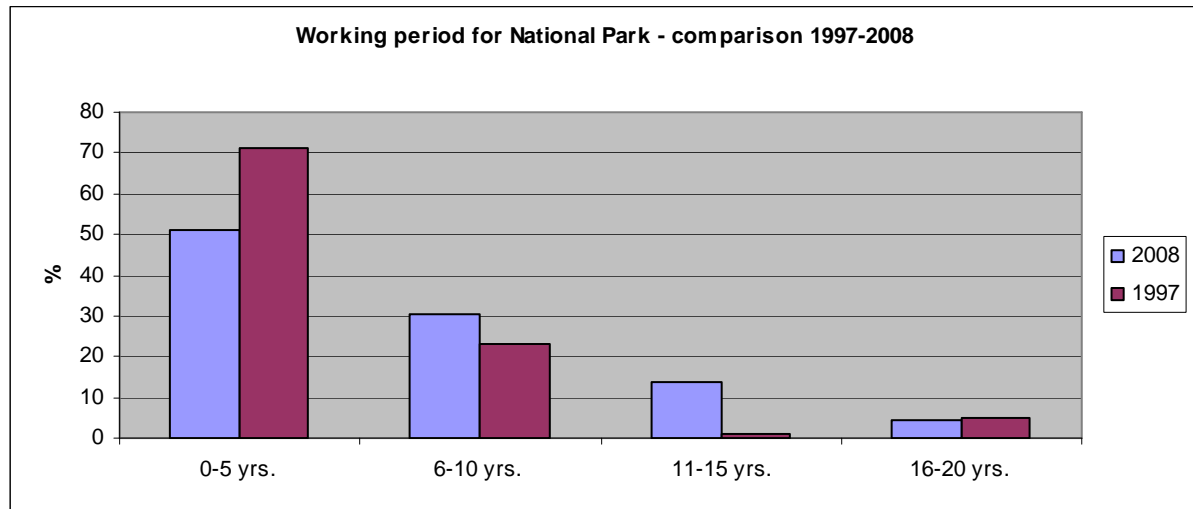


**Figure 19** Crosstab „Distance residence – National Park“/National Park, n = 137

## Working period in National Parks

From 139 respondents stated 130 or 94%, that they were active as National Park Ranger in the last two years. The questions about the period, how long you are active in the particular National Park, resulted in a mean of 6.6 years, whereas the

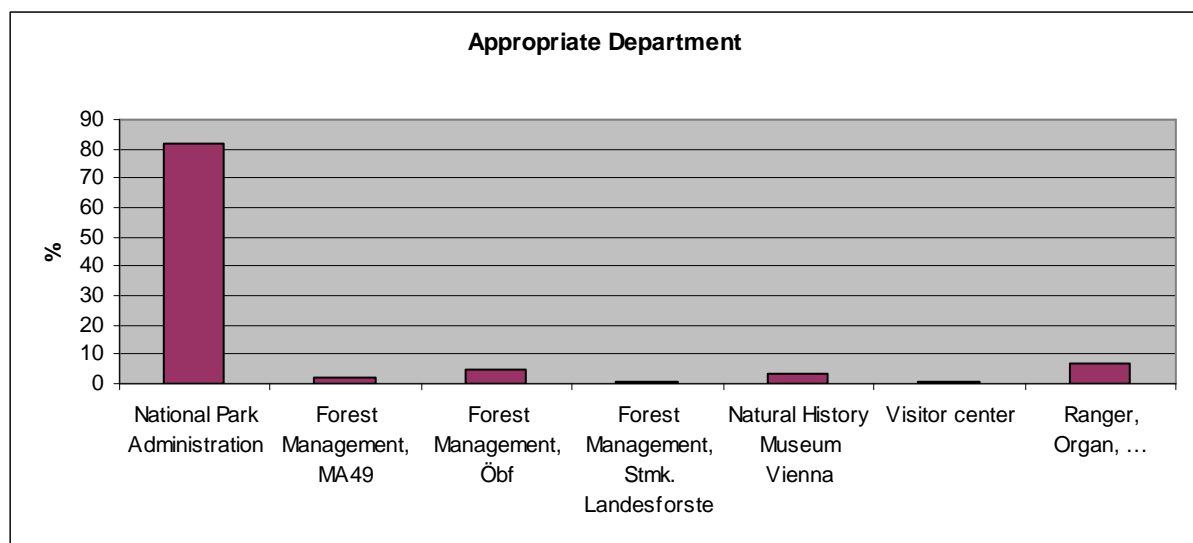
half of all respondents belongs to the group “0-5 years”. In comparison to 1997 a significant shifting in aid of this “young” group can be recognized, whereupon this change can be explained by the National Parks added in the last 10 years.



**Figure 20** Working period for National Park 2008 – comparison 1997-2008, n(2008) = 137, n(1997) = 104

## Appropriate Department

The question according to the associated department within the particular National Park was stated with “National Park administration” from more than four-fifths (83%) of the respondents.

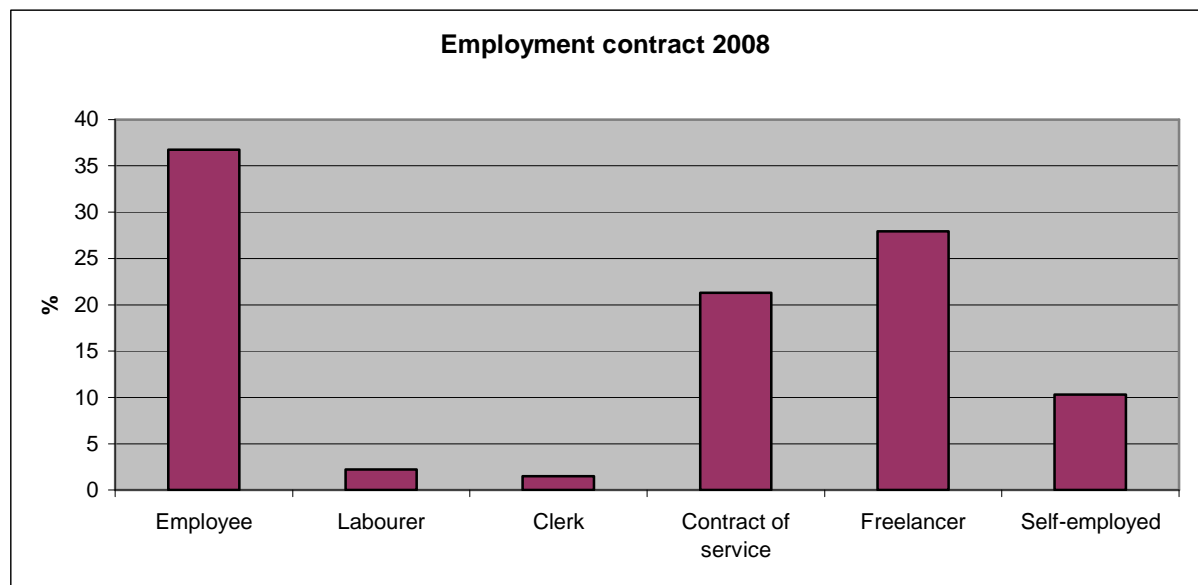


**Figure 21** Appropriate Department, n = 130

## 7.2. *Employment*

### Employment contract

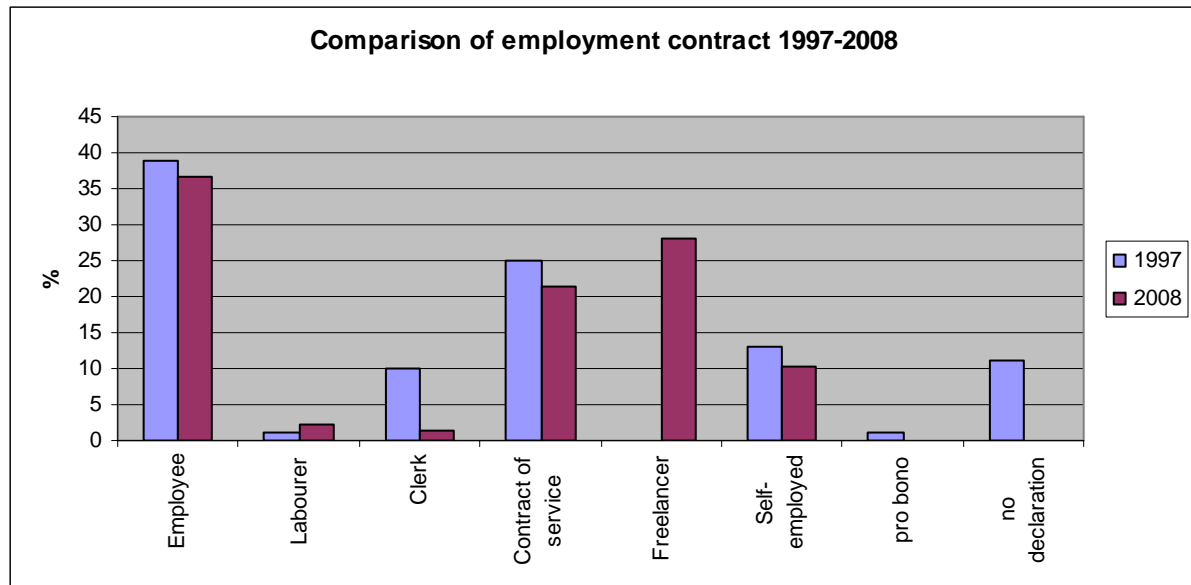
From 136 valid returned questionnaires according to this question almost 40% stated to be at least temporarily employed as employee, clerk or operator, 60% work with a contract for service, as freelancer or self-employed on a fee basis.



**Figure 22**      **Employment contract 2008, n = 136**

The comparison with the survey from the year 1997 shows a relatively constant dispersion, but one exception: the employment contract as freelancer, which was added in the meantime, covers almost 30% of all answers in 2008. Once more it becomes apart, that in the Austrian National Park scene a very different idea of the optimal employment of National Park Rangers exists.

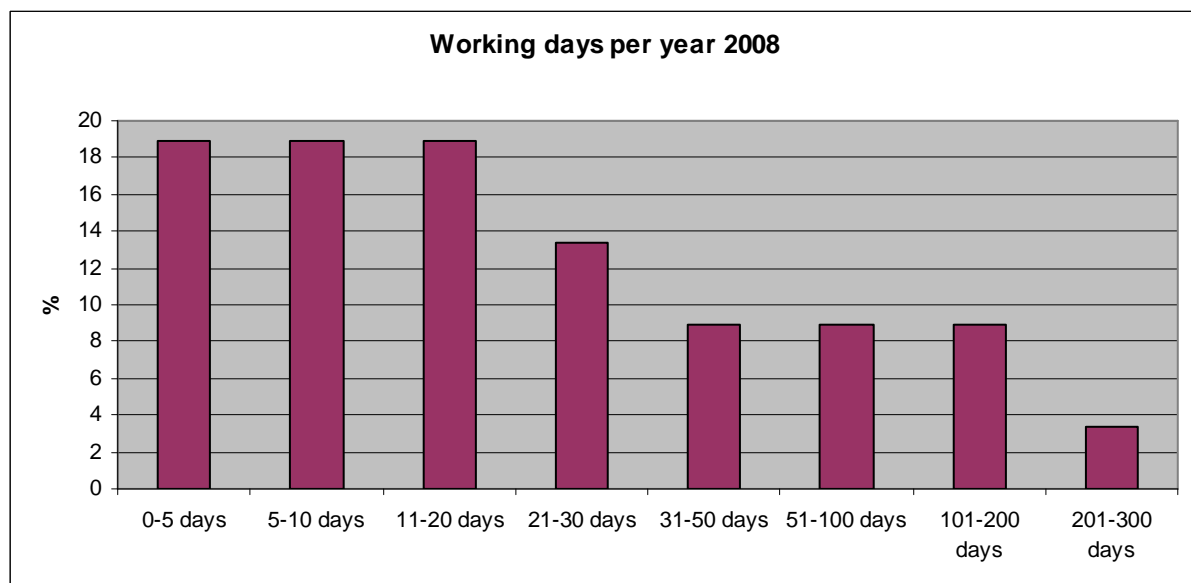




**Figure 23** Comparison of employment contract 1997-2008, n(2008) = 136, n(1997) = 111

### Working days per year

Those, who don't have a fixed employment over the whole year within the National Park administration or an associated institution, were asked to mention their estimated number of working days per year. More than the half of all respondents in this group work less than 20 days per year in the particular National Park.



**Figure 24** Working days per year, n = 90

## Working on weekends

The high and since 1997 considerably increased degree of work on weekends, reflects the great professional commitment of National Park Rangers.

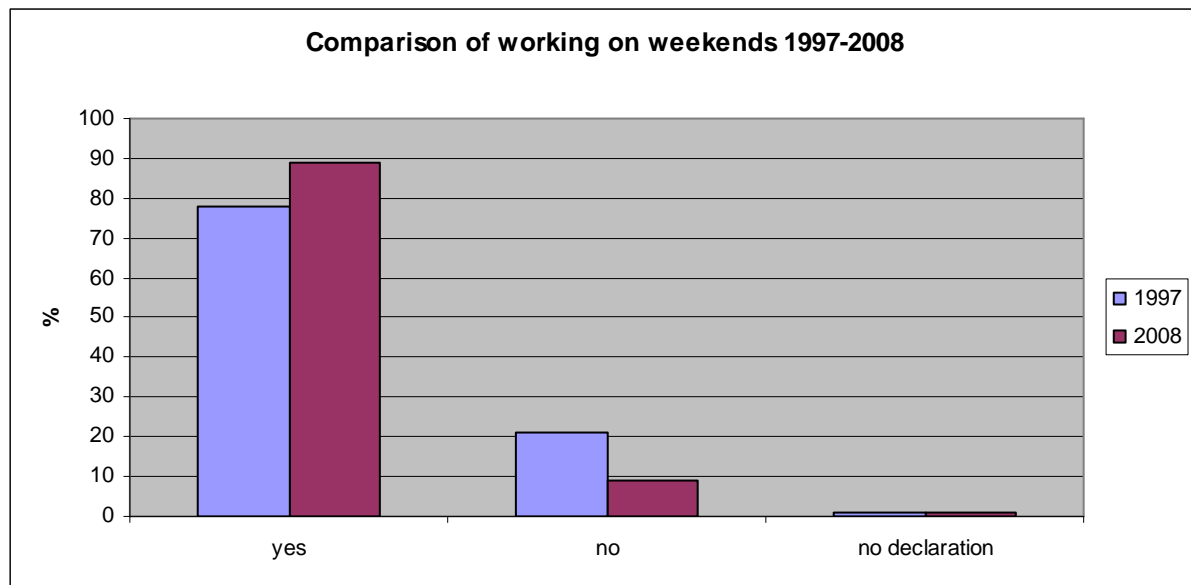


Figure 25 Comparison of working on weekends 1997-2008, n(2008) = 140, n(1997) = 111

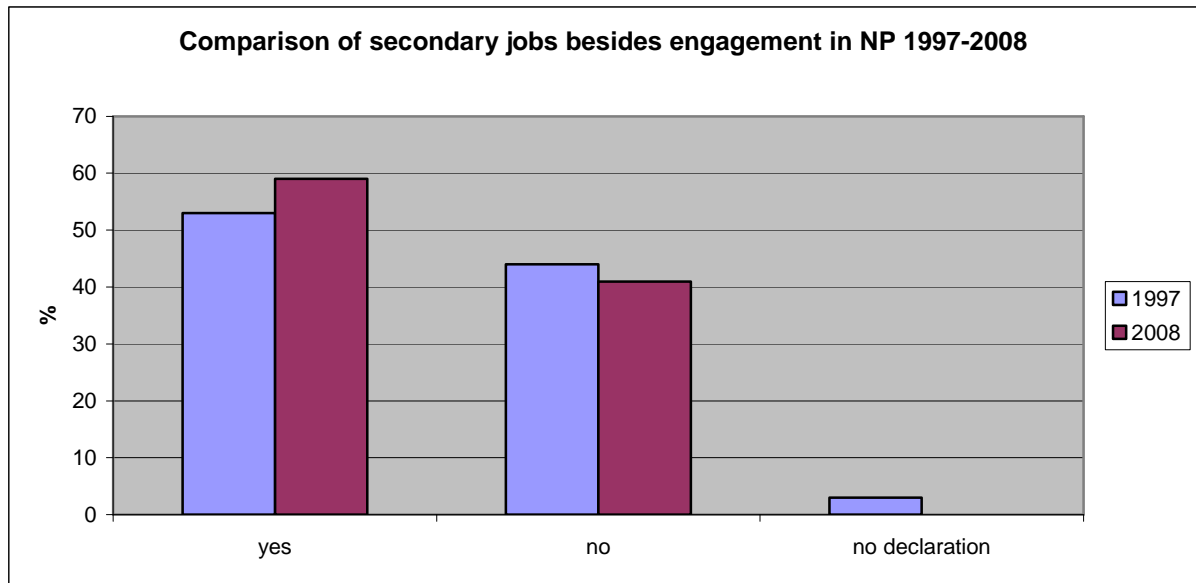
## Secondary jobs beside engagement in National Park

83 persons (59%) answered, that they still carry out a job in addition to their engagement in the National Park, whereas 85% of these people carry out the side job during the whole year and only 15% seasonally. In comparison to 1997 there was a slight increase displayed, but primarily a clear increase in those persons carrying out a side job during the whole year can be recognized.

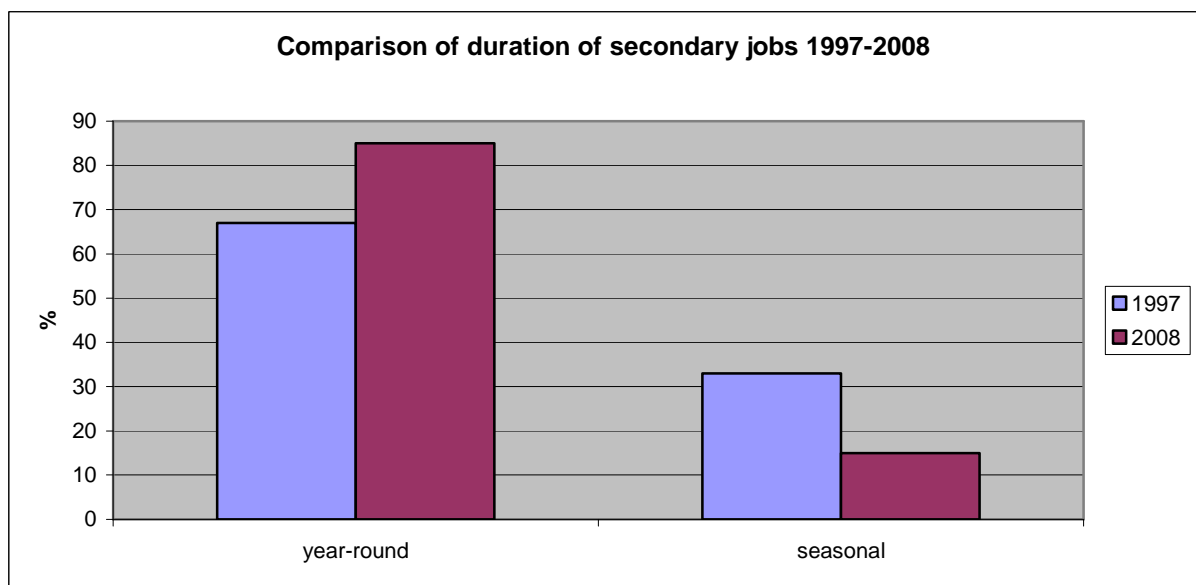
In additional employments are pedagogic and social jobs dominating, followed by nature scientific functions. More than two-third of persons with a side job sense this activity as reasonable complement to their job as National Park Ranger. This high accordance is reflected in the result from 1997.

Particularly oppositional are the National Park Neusiedlersee/Seewinkel and Hohe Tauern regarding to side jobs. Whereas nearly every Ranger from the National Park

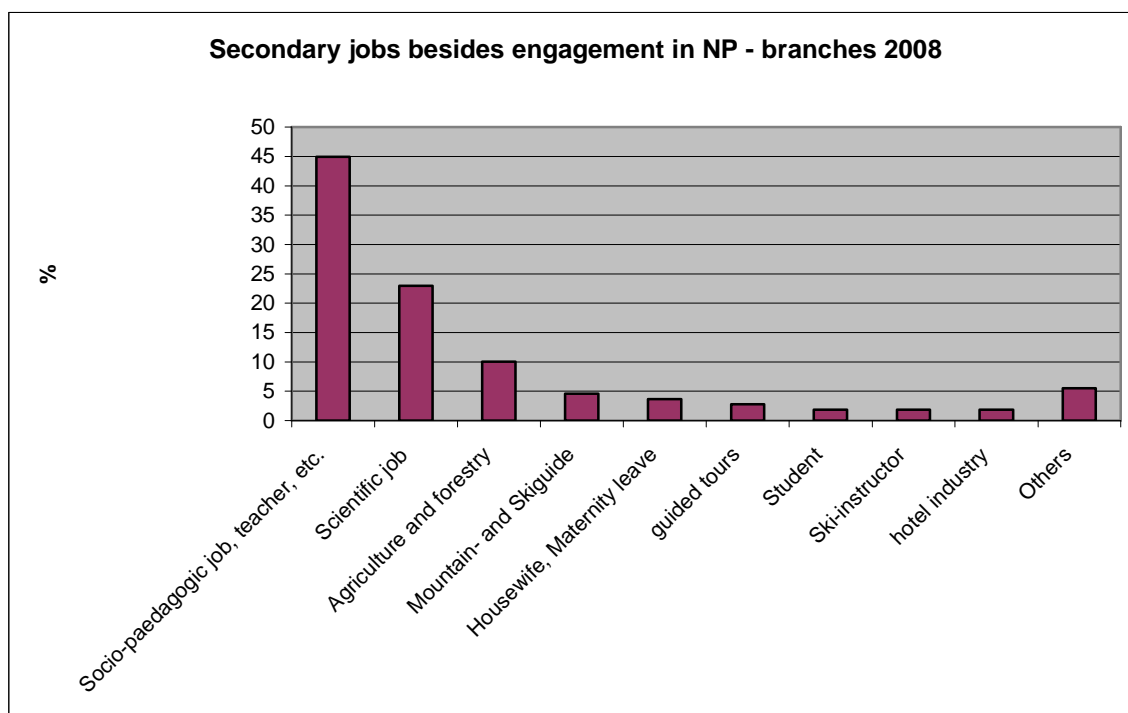
Neusiedlersee/Seewinkel holds down at least one side job is the situation in the Hohen Tauern almost converse.



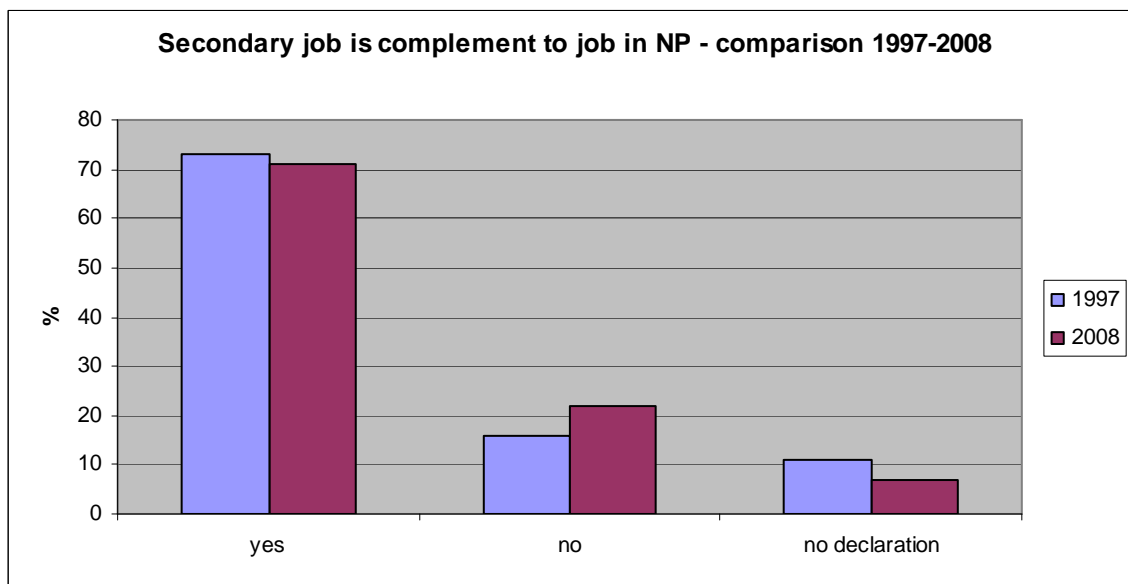
**Figure 26** Comparison of secondary jobs besides engagement in National Park 1997-2008,  $n(2008) = 140$ ,  $n(1997) = 111$



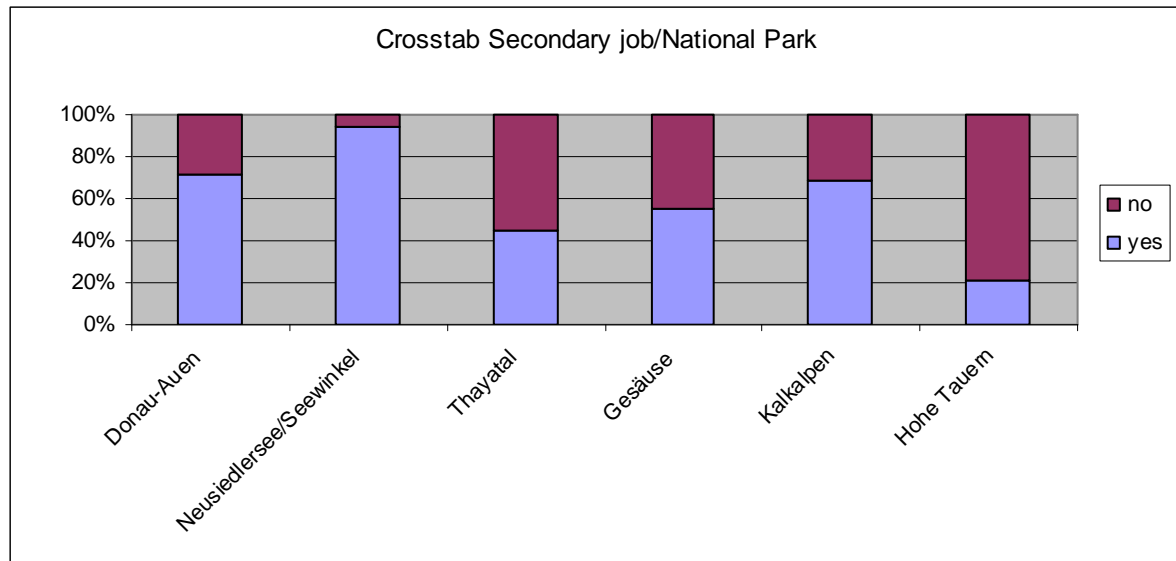
**Figure 27** Comparison of duration of secondary jobs 1997-2008,  $n(2008) = 47$ ,  $n(1997) = 59$



**Figure 28** Secondary jobs besides engagement in National Park – branches, n = 83, multiple counts



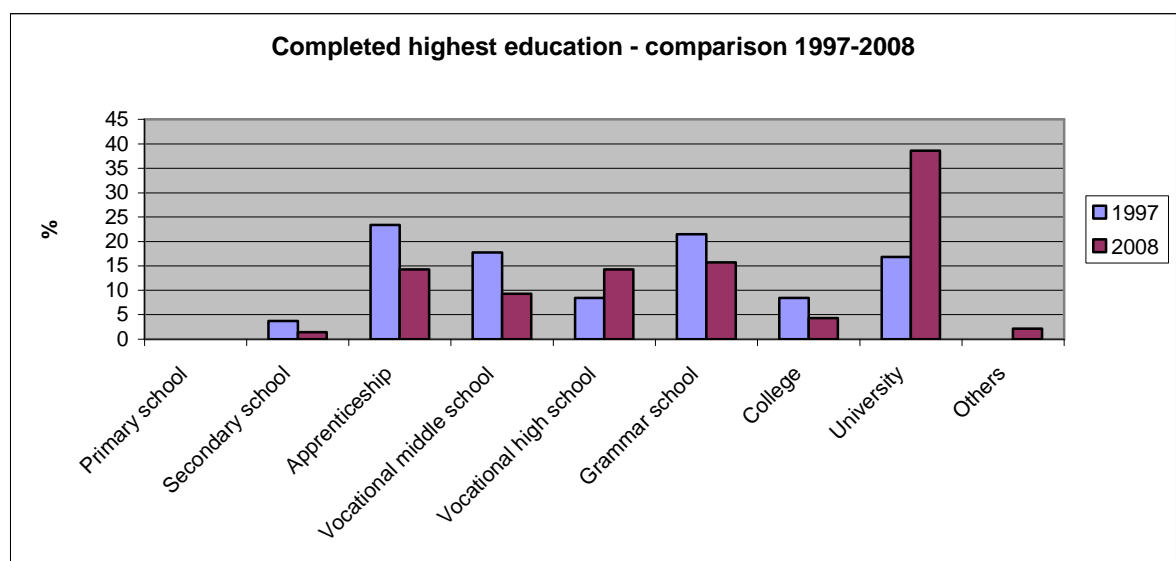
**Figure 29** Comparison of the job complementation 1997-2008, n(2008) =83, n(1997) = 59



**Figure 30** Crosstab Secondary job/National Park, n = 140, p < 0,05

## Personal education

A comparison of the highest completed education shows a clear change between 1997 and 2008: meanwhile nearly 40% of current National Park Rangers have an academic background that is an increase about twice as much compared to 1997. The highest graduate rates can be found in National Park Donauauen, Thayatal and Gesäuse. Because these National Parks are the youngest in Austria, this result correlates well with the increase of the graduate rates from 1997 to 2008.



**Figure 31** Completed highest education – comparison 1997-2008, n(2008) = 140, n(1997) = 107

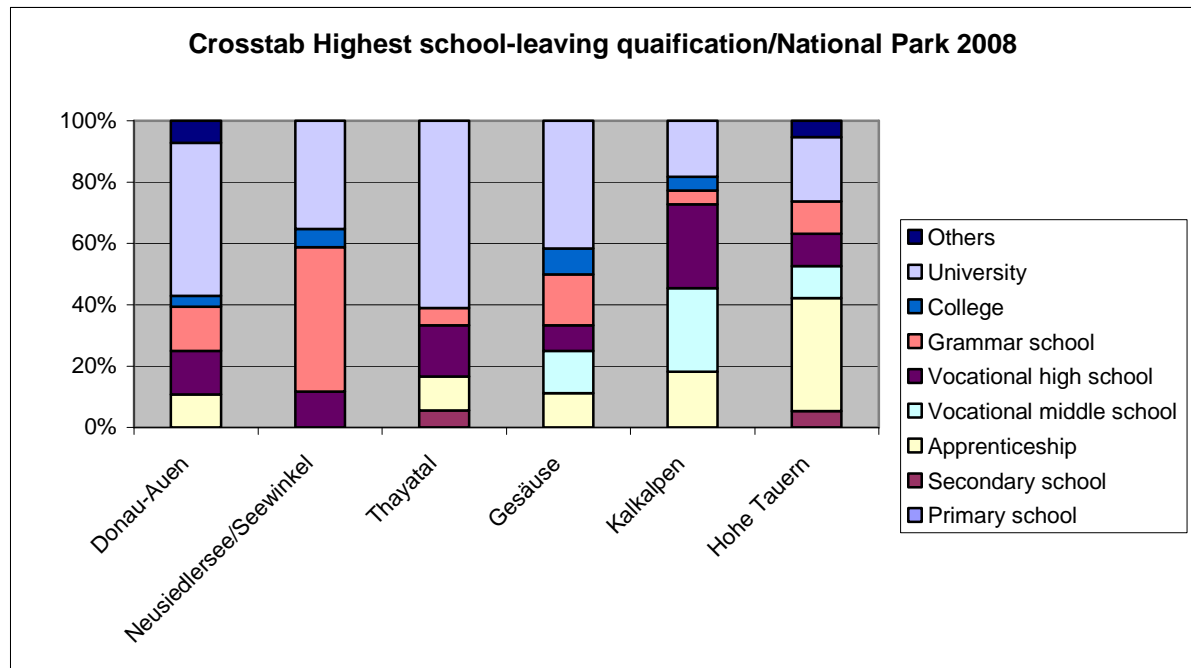


Figure 32 Crosstab Highest school-leaving qualification/National Park 2008, n = 140

### Professional training besides job

24% of the respondents are in a professional training in addition to their activity in the National Park. But there is no noticeable difference in comparison with the study from 1997.



Figure 33 Comparison of professional training besides job in National Park 1997-2008, n(2008) = 140, n(1997) = 111

## Jobs before National Park engagement

In 2008 116 persons or 85% of respondents stated to have been already working before their activity in the National Park. This number is correlating with the distribution of age categories in this study. Similar to the question about a current side job, predominate pedagogic, social and nature scientific job – though not so clearly. The assumption stands to reason, that a function in a National Park has a stake in the thematic choice of a possible side job, but this is statistically (...) verifiable. Almost two-thirds of persons with a professional past stated, that this activity is a reasonable complement to the current engagement in the National Park.

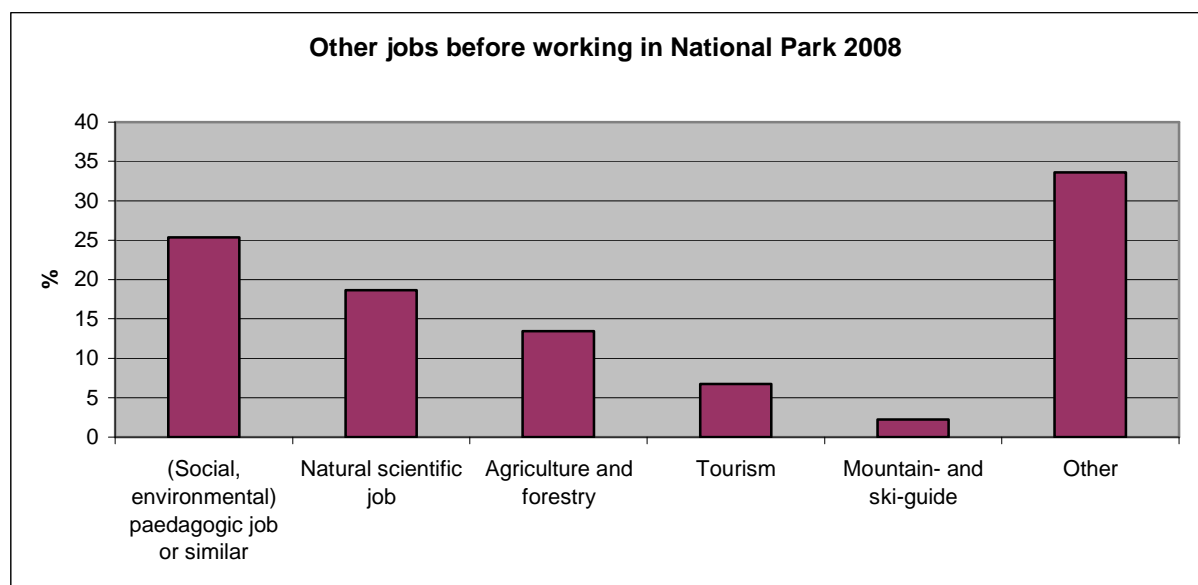


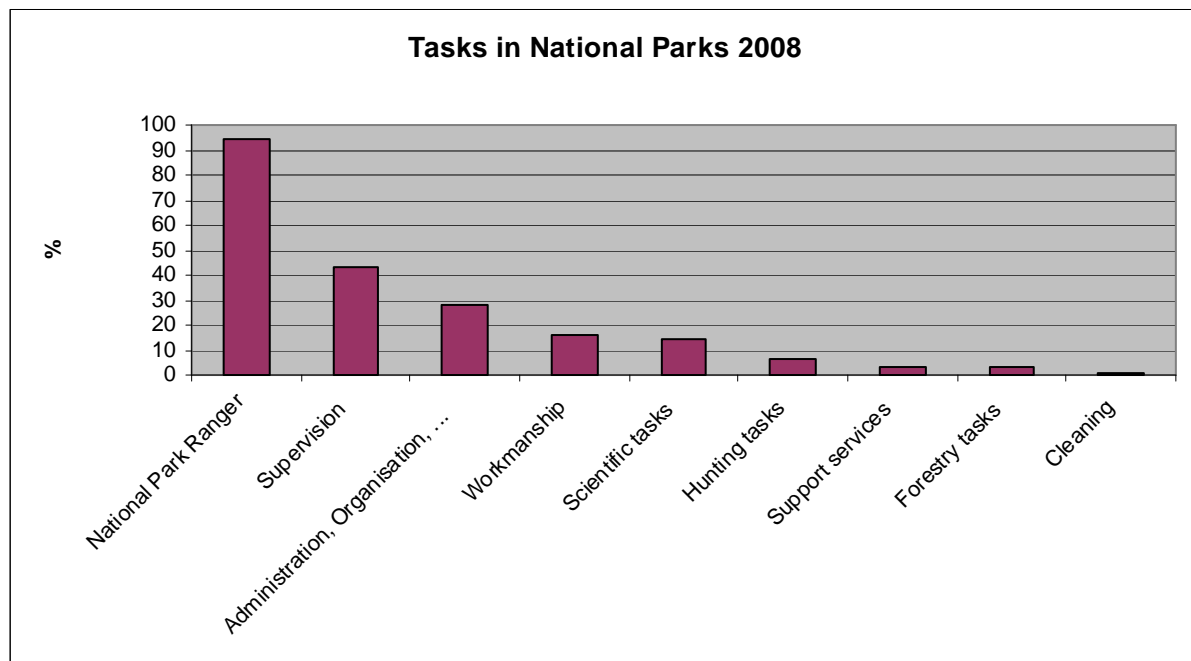
Figure 34 Other jobs before working in National Park, n = 114

## 7.3. Activities and official duties of the National Park Ranger

### Field of activity

Activities of National Park Rangers are not limited to guided tours and respectively to assistance of National Park visitors, but comprehend different other tasks. 132 persons and respectively 94% stated to undertake guided tours in the National Park,

61 respondents or 44% carry out area supervision. After all one-third operates in the department of administration and organisation and in each case about 15% of Rangers are working mechanically and respectively within the context of scientific research in the National Park. Altogether, the distribution reflects very well the multifaceted fields of responsibility, which the National Park Rangers hold down within their engagement.



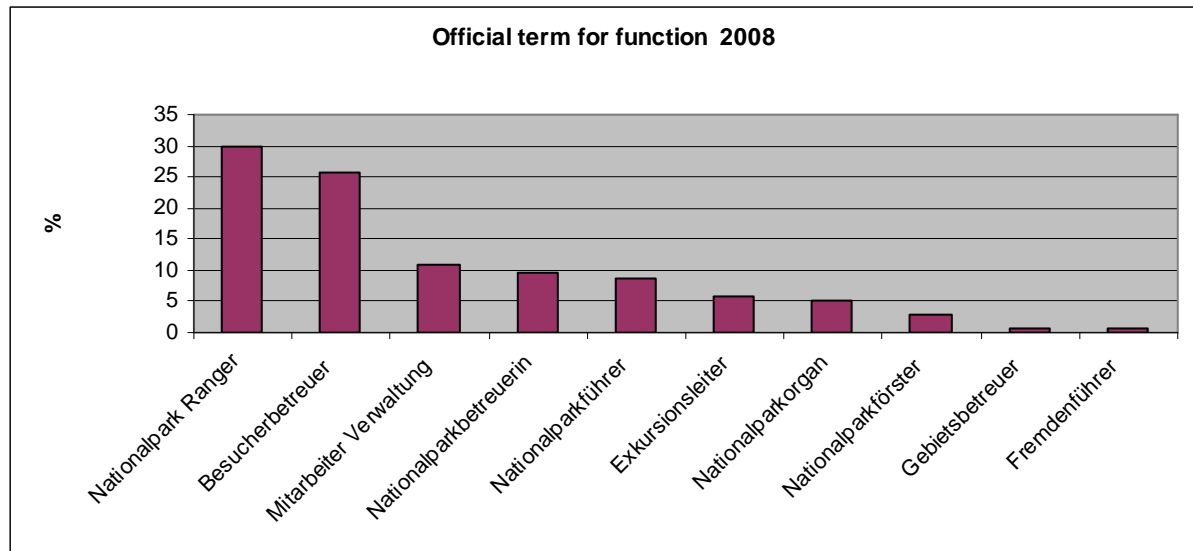
**Figure 35** Tasks in National Parks 2008, n = 140, multiple counts

### Official term for function

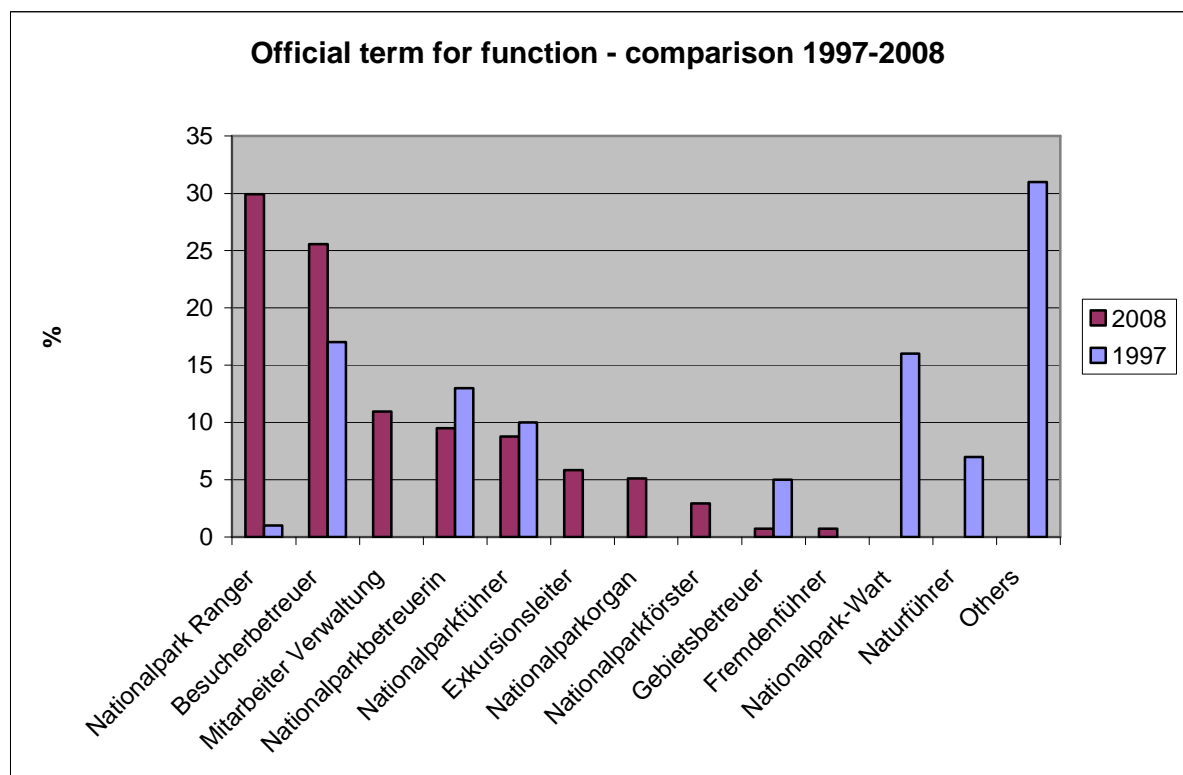
Nearly one-third or 30% of all respondents stated to use „National Park Ranger“ as the official term for their function. Almost the same is the term “Besucherbetreuer” with 26%. 10% ranked themselves among the National Park administration staff without an individual term and nearly one-third of all answers were distributed between seven other terms. Altogether, a very irregular pattern in Austria is resulting. This will be reinforced, if you look closer at the consciousness about the official term from each member. The table shows a clear pattern, although there is no clear significance: the multifaceted terms within the particular National Park administrations can only partly be traced back to real existing different term and are based rather on ignorance and insecurity. A relatively uniform picture shows the National Park Hohe



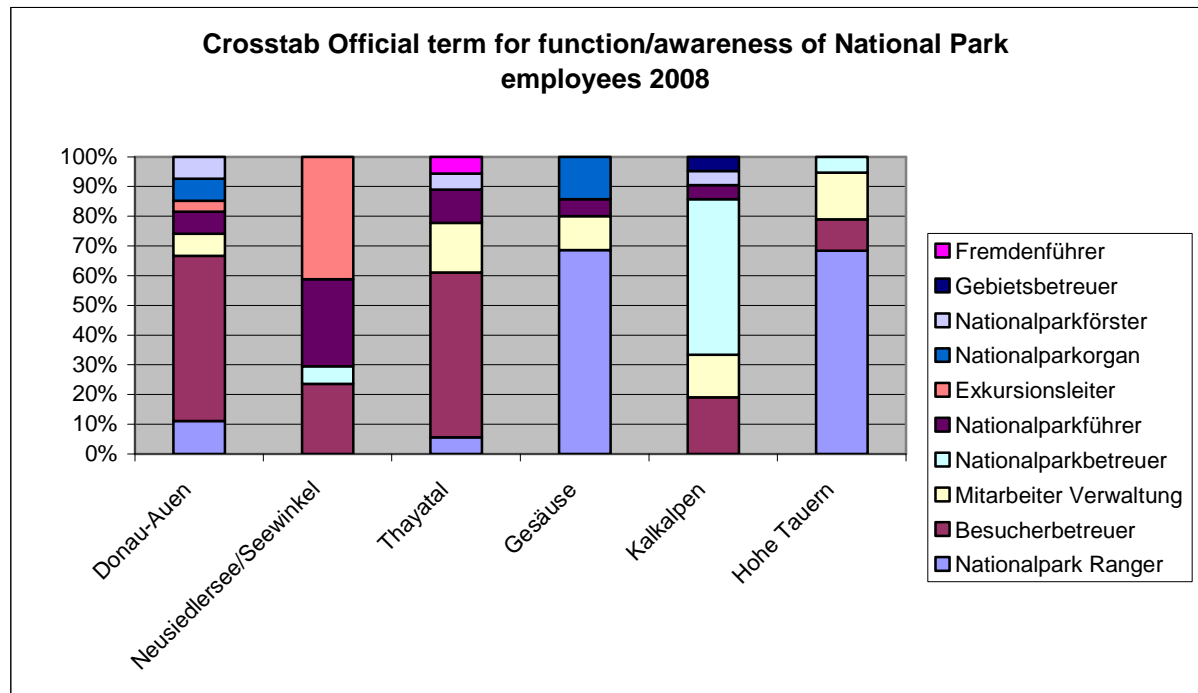
Tauern and Gesäuse, which run the official term “National Park Ranger”. In the National Park Donauauen and Thayatal dominates the term “Besucherbetreuer”, while in the Kalkalpen “Nationalparkbetreuer” is favoured. The comparison between 1997 and 2008 is interesting: the increase of the term “National Park Ranger” from 1% to 30% is obvious.



**Figure 36** Official term for function, n = 137



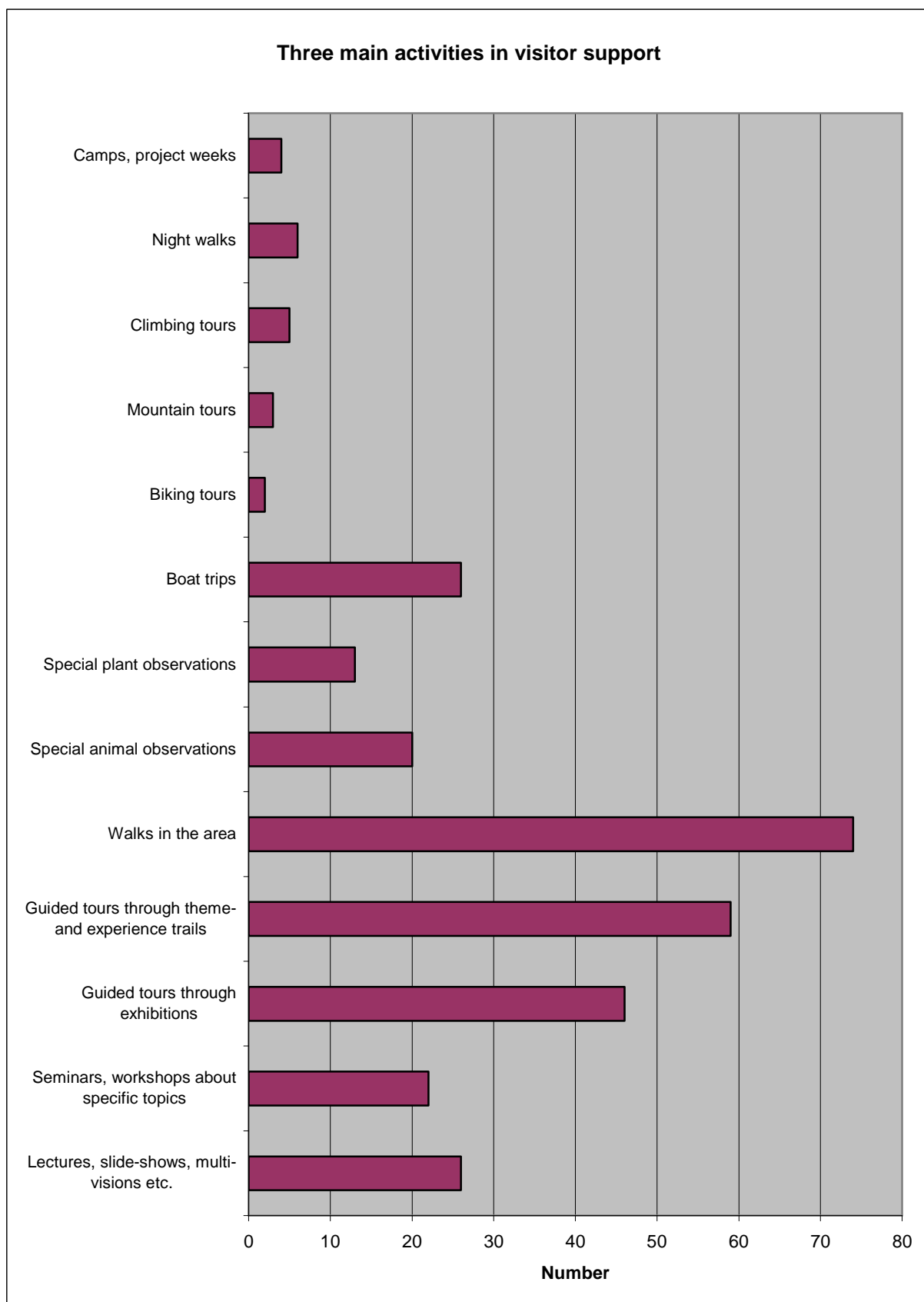
**Figure 37** Official term for function – comparison 1997-2008, n(2008) = 137, n(1997) = 111



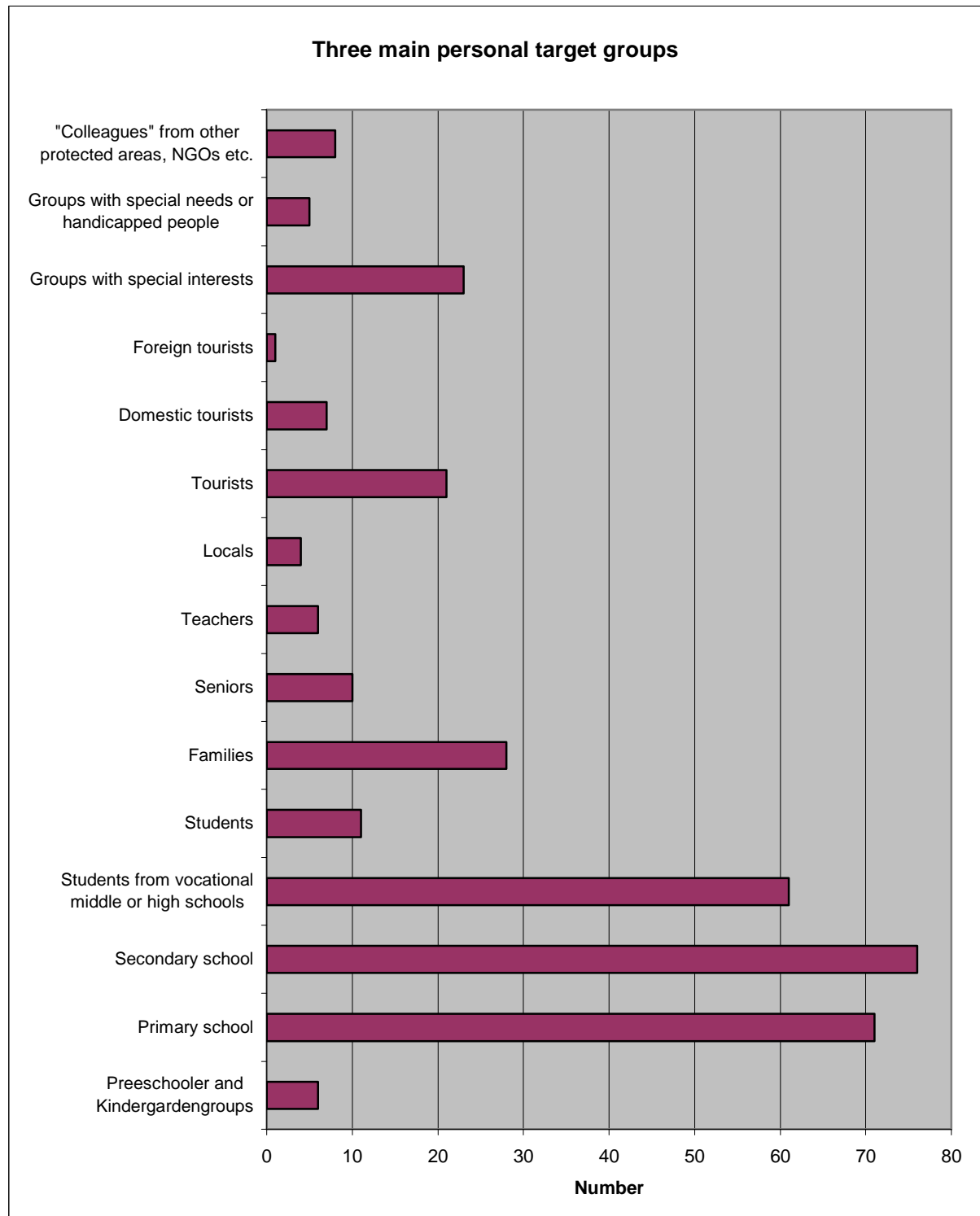
**Figure 38**      **Crosstab Official term for function/awareness of National Park employees 2008,**  
**n = 137**

#### **7.4.      *Visitor support***

Mostly contemplated types of visitor support are „interpretive walks in the area“, „guided tours through theme- and experience trails“ and „guided tours through exhibitions“. In doing so the last-mentioned activity has experienced an enormous boom in the last ten years, which is no wonder in view of the rapidly increasing number of visitor centres and information centres. Above all visitors accept special offers extremely well, which are naturally differently represented in the particular National Parks. Boat trips rate among the main activities in National Park Donauauen and Gesäuse, seasonal adapted animal observations are popular in Gesäuse as well as in National Park Neusiedlersee/Seewinkel and Kalkalpen and generally slide-shows and presentations enjoy great popularity.

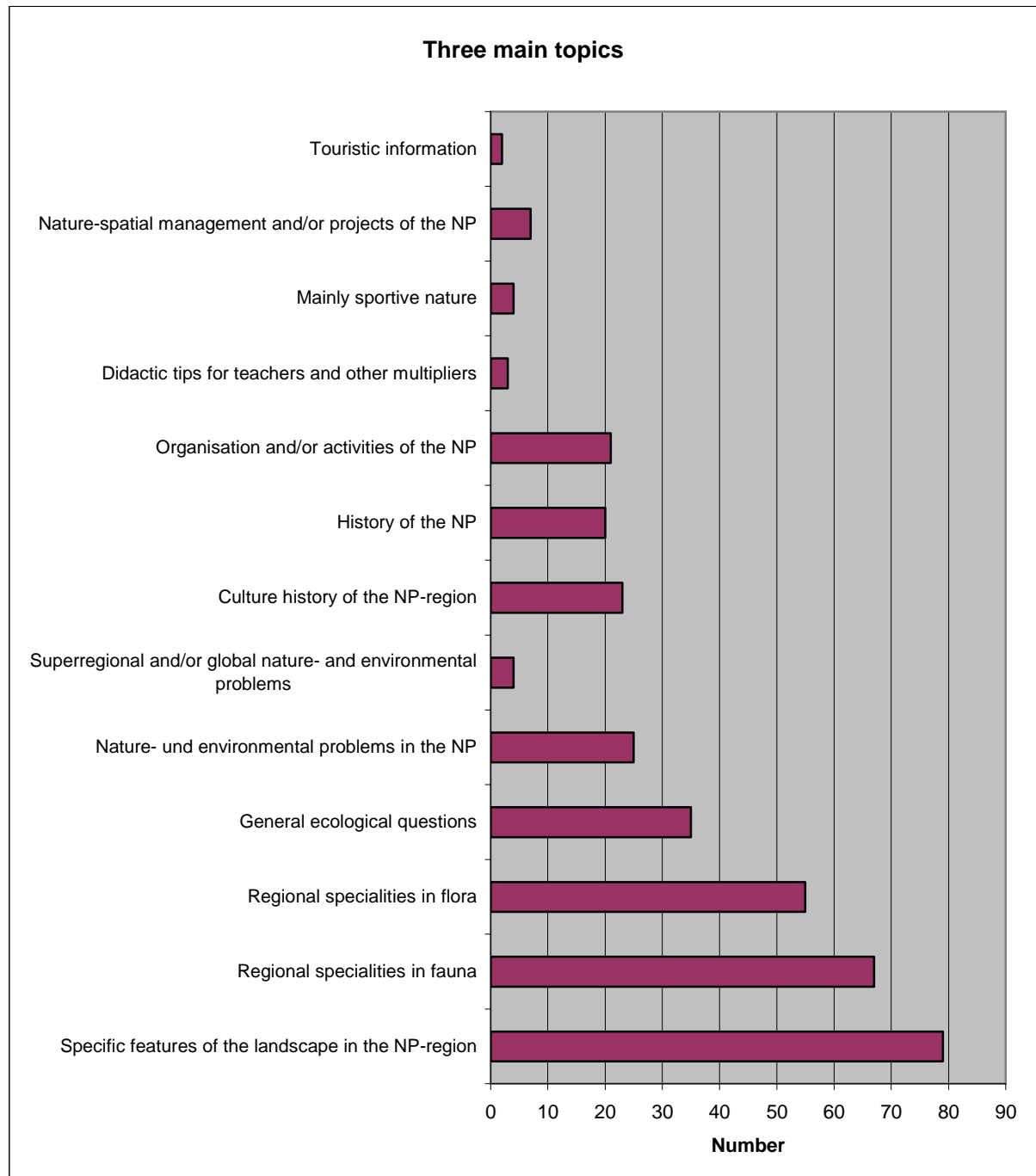


**Figure 39** Three main activities in visitor support, 2008, n = 140, multiple counts



**Figure 40**      **Three main personal target groups, 2008, n = 140, multiple counts**

The main target groups of National Park Rangers are – both in nationally average and for the single National Park administration – primarily school classes, followed by families, people with special interests and tourists from foreign countries and inland.

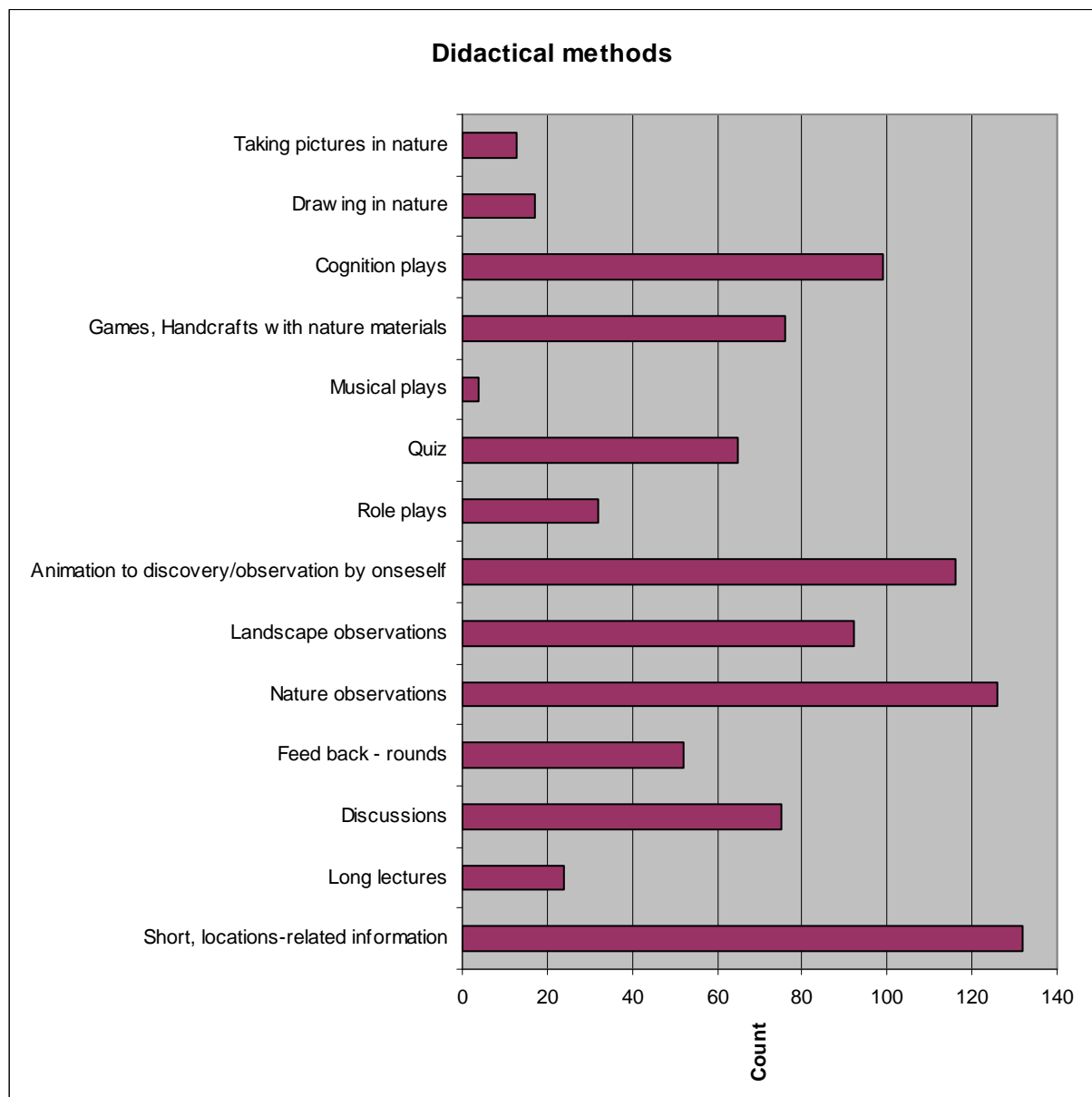


**Figure 41**      **Three main topics, 2008, n = 140, multiple counts**

During guided tours the focus is on regional specialties in the landscape and fauna and flora. Ecological specifics as well as special problems relating to the environment are frequently approached. Other, often quoted topics are the historical background of the National Park region and also facts about the history of the National Park foundation and administrative and organisational management of the single parks.

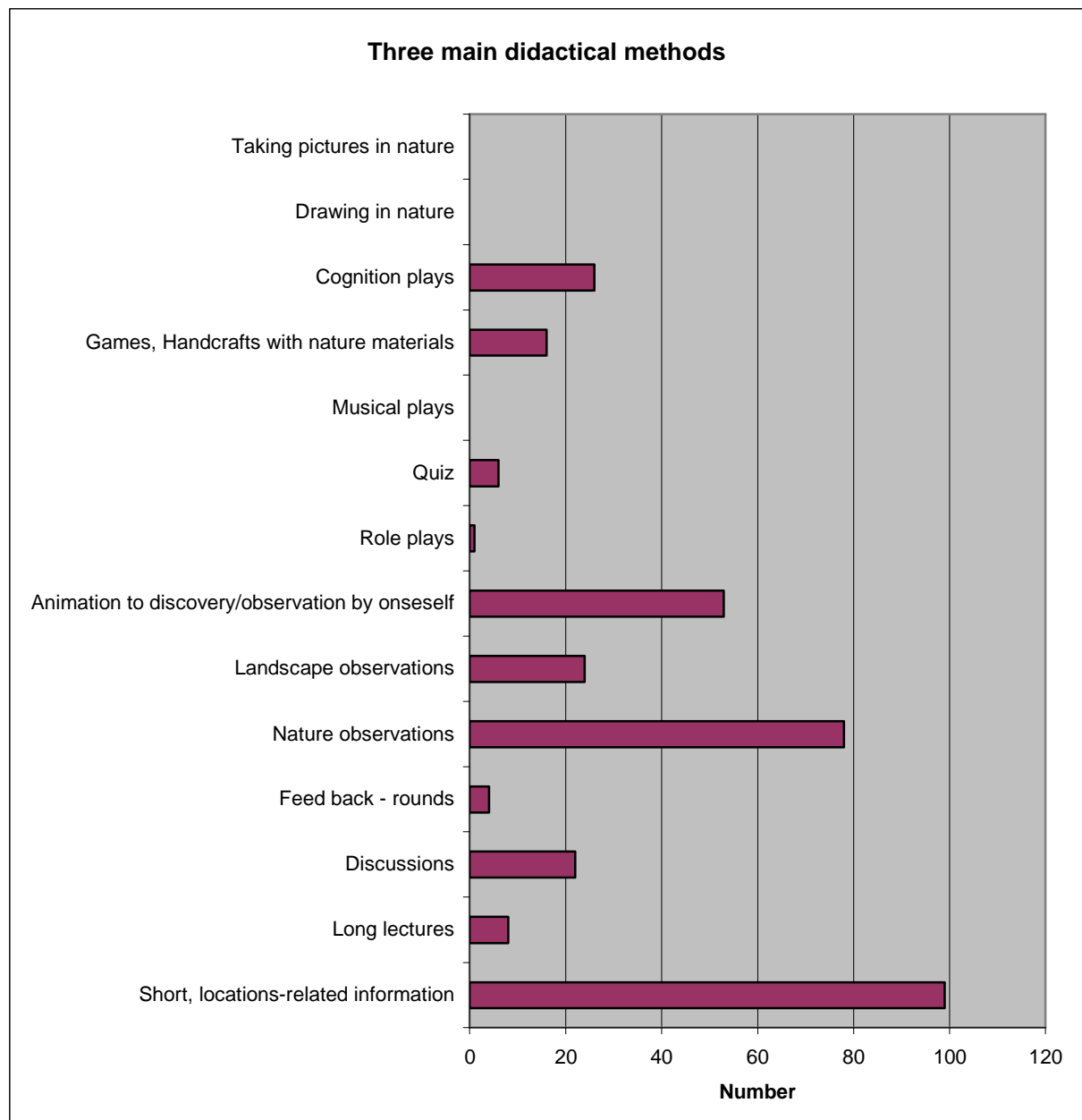
## Methodical repertoire at guided tours

The general question about used didactical methods shows a broad spectrum of possibilities to guarantee visitors of a National Park an impressive and sustainable interpretation. It is also shown, that National Park Rangers have a broad skid of possibilities to communicate age- and target group adapted complex topics, due to their training.



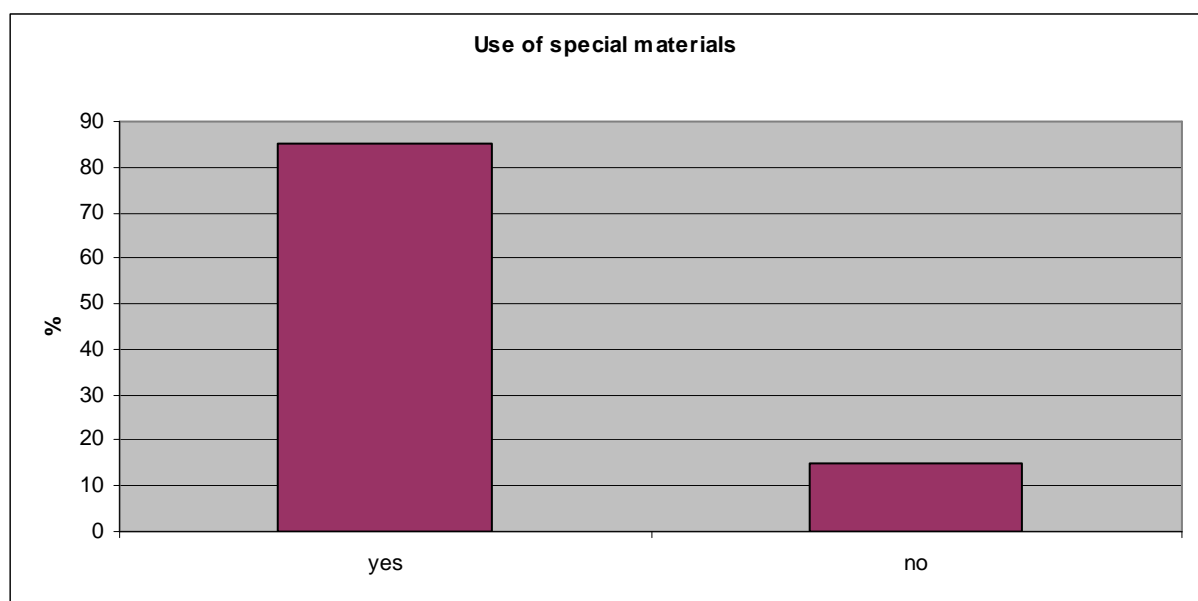
**Figure 42** Didactical methods, 2008, n = 140, multiple counts

The question, however, about the three personally most important interpretative methods shows that still (in comparison with 1997) short location-related information, mutual nature observations as well as the encouraging and sensitizing to own discoveries and observation are in the foreground. The use of role plays, cognition plays or animations by means of didactical materials were not quoted or hardly quoted as basically interpretative methods.



**Figure 43** Three main didactical methods, used by Rangers, 2008, n = 140, multiple counts

Special aids are used by 85% of National Park Ranger during a guided tour – even if not urgently. This value exactly corresponds to the survey of 1997. Mostly this aids or “props” derive from the private source or from the National Park administration. The term “prop” comes from the English language and means requisite (property of stage). Each dedicated National Park Ranger should aspire to collect his/her own little collection of useful demonstration materials, which are often handy for illustration and easy to purchase. According to their constitution “props” illustrate either true objects from nature, artificial copies in form of models and dummies or pictures.

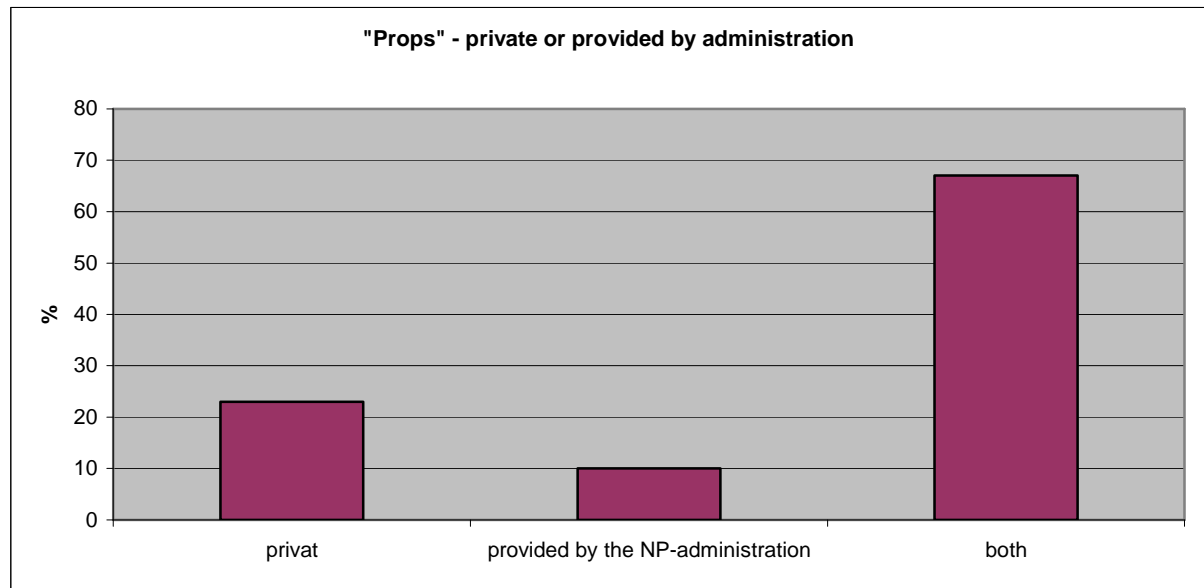


**Figure 44** Use of special materials, 2008, n = 135

Applied didactical materials are mainly:

Lenses, animal preparations, game-card, blindfolds, ropes, nets for puddling, paper and pens, fact books, binoculars, microscopes and spotting scopes, preparations of plant parts, clay, egg – and feather preparations, photos, mirrors, stop watches, prepared traces of animals, general nature materials (examples: conches, scat, horns, bones etc.), sound dummies, compasses, tweezers, wool, feeling bags, maps, thermometers, bat-detectors, field guides, et al.





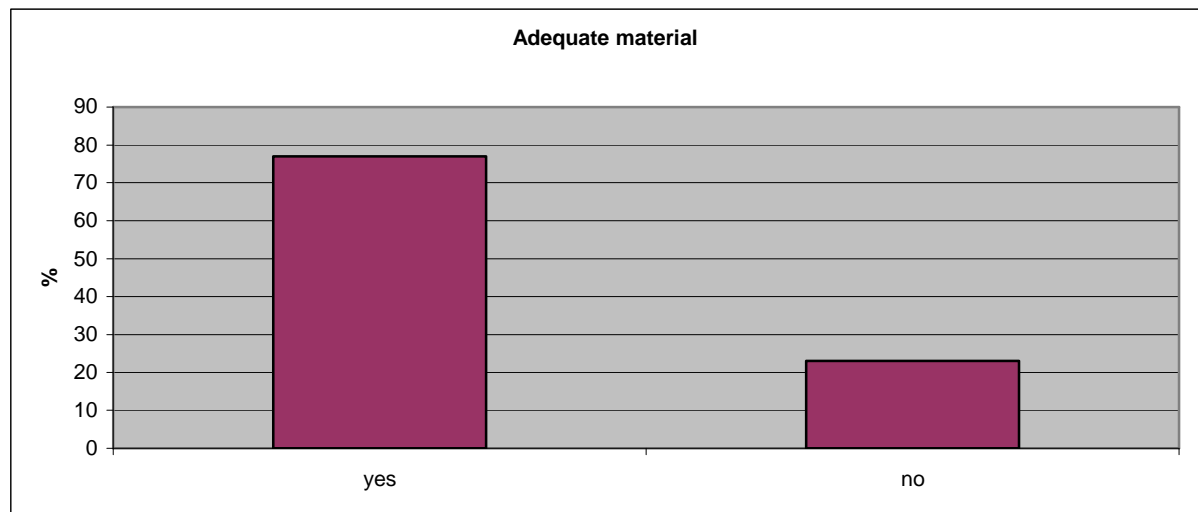
**Figure 45** „Props“ (special materials for didactical use), 2008, n = 114

### Service equipment

The predominantly part of polled National Park Ranger was satisfied with the existing service equipment in the particular National Park. Quoted items were mainly service clothing, binoculars, mobile phone, didactical aids, first aid equipments as well as occasionally rain clothes. Anyway, about one-fourth hold that the equipment is so far only limited adequate.

Desired equipment items were mainly:

Emergency-equipment, rucksack, binoculars, mobile phone, didactical equipment like bug eye viewers, blindfolds, ropes, etc., maps, information material, service clothing, rain clothes, hats, compasses, identity cards, knives, service (hiking) boots.

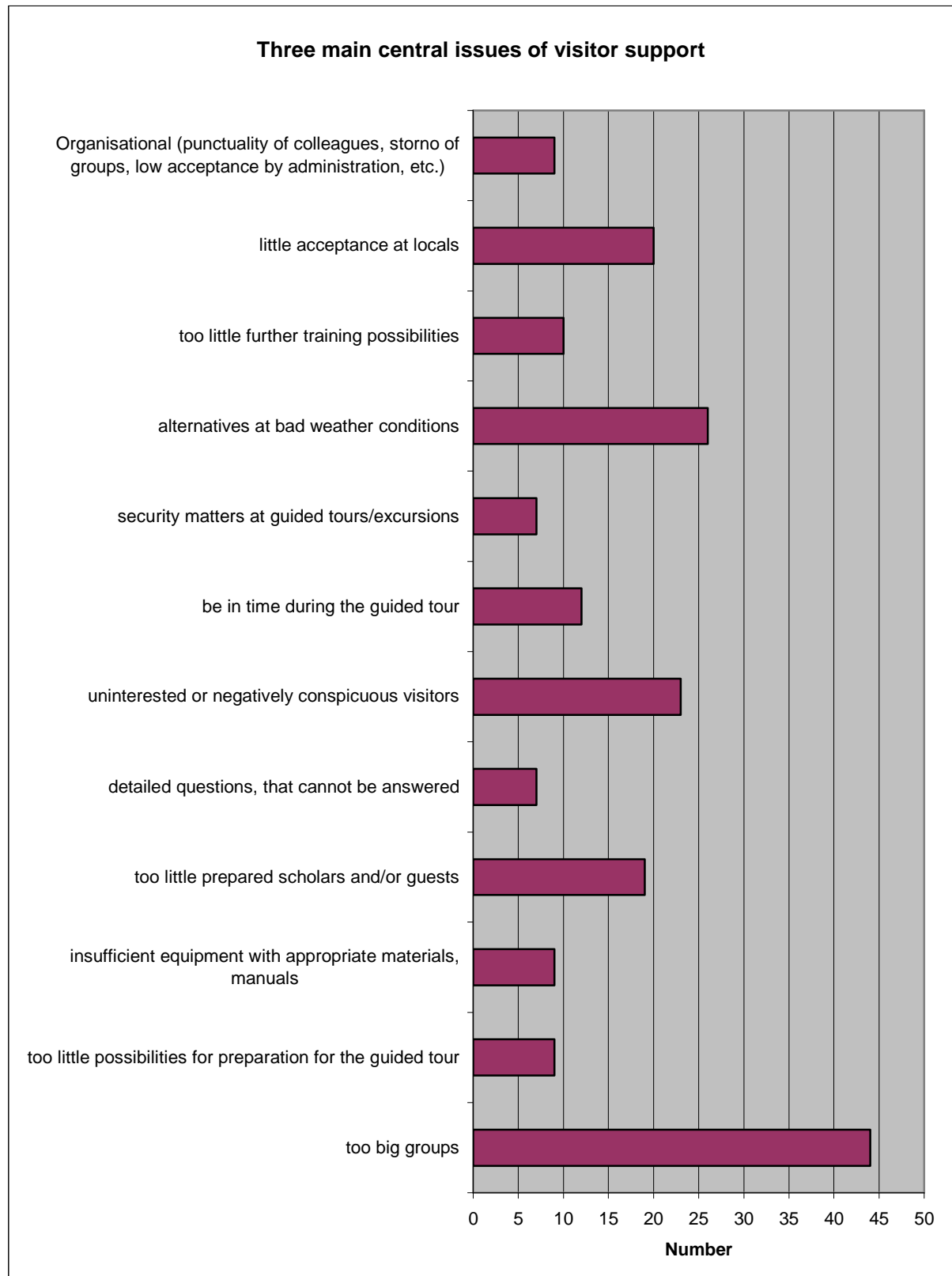


**Figure 46** Adequate material, 2008, n = 132

### Problems with visitor support

From the National Park Ranger's point of view the by far most frequently quoted problem is the group size. Associated with it and likewise often stated are difficulties to motivate disinterested visitors. This point applies particularly to school groups, which are able to annoy delicately due to group dynamic. Another problem, which is practically conceived the same in all National Parks, are adequate alternatives for visitor support at bad weather conditions. Primarily in alpine sanctuaries the partly poor prearrangement and equipment of visitors is pointed out as big problem. This point as well is mainly related to the big size of school classes, which often turn up with inadequate footgear and inaccurate clothes for project days.

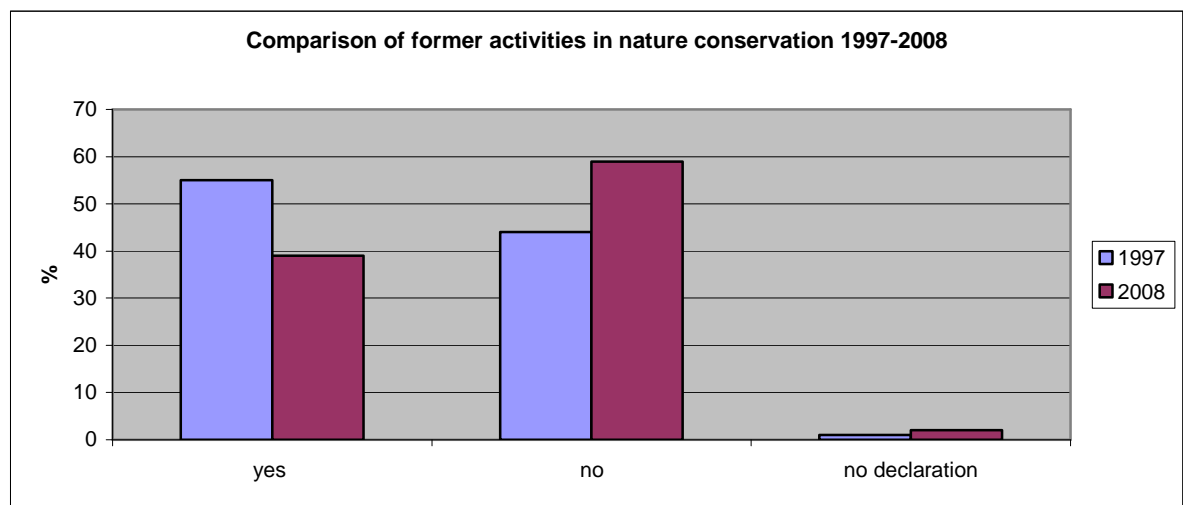
A lack of acceptance among the local people was also often stated and is primarily in young National Parks a problem. Detailed questions, which can not be answered, time management, as well as organizational lacks and security questions were also noticed as important disturbances of guiding activities.



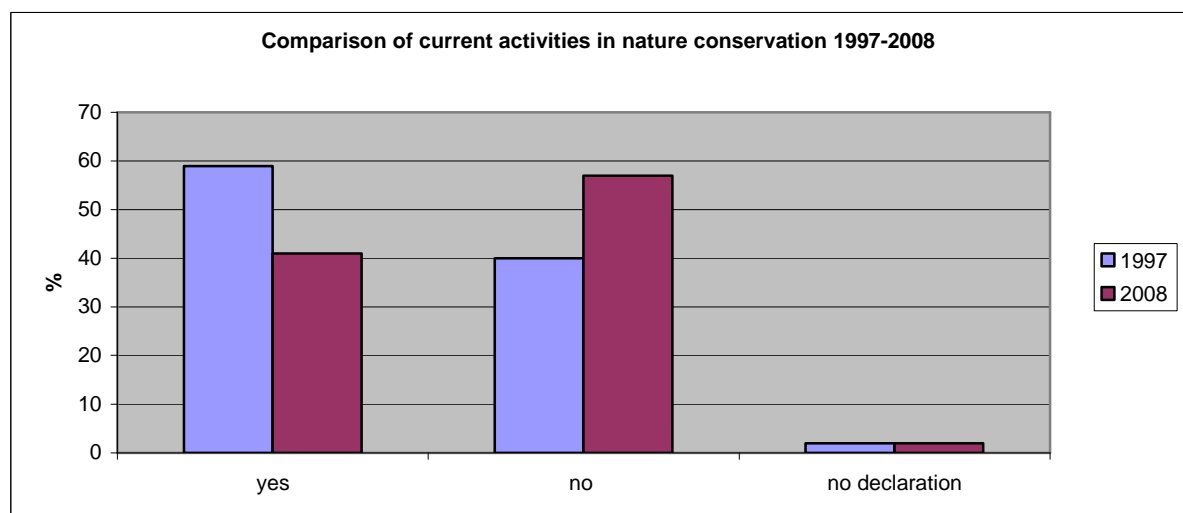
**Figure 47** Three main central issues of visitor support, 2008, n = 140, multiple counts

## 7.5. Nature conservation

The completion of nature conservation-activities is a major part of the work in National Parks. In comparison to the survey of 1997 only less than 40% of the respondents stated to have gained experience in different conservancy organisations and respectively of active conservation work before they started their function in the National Park.

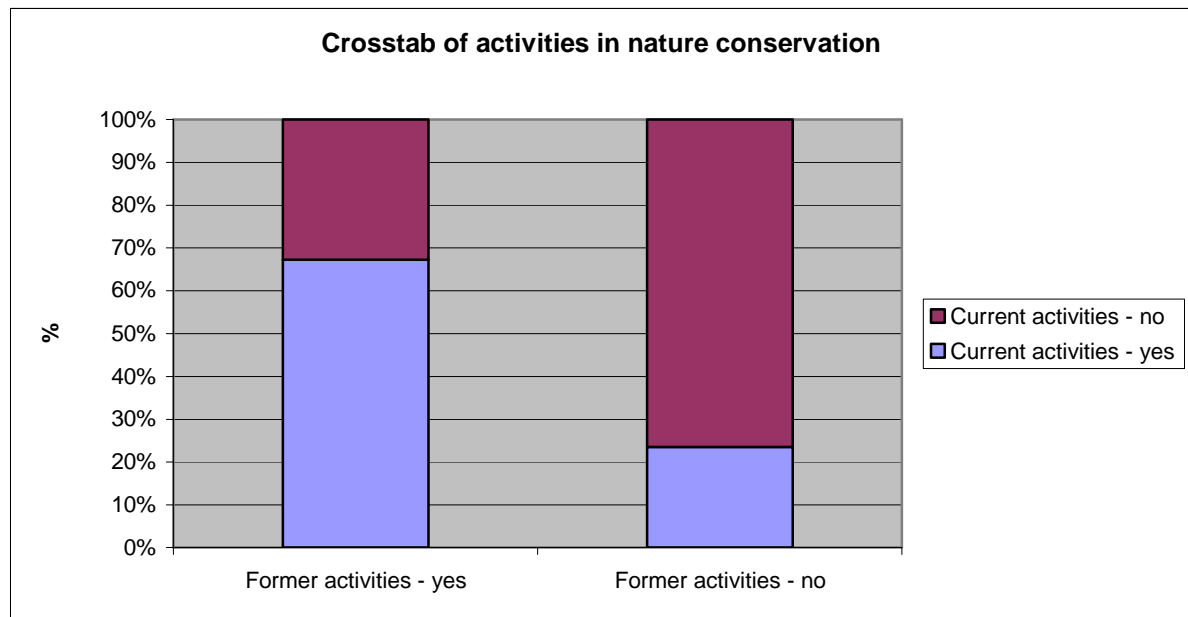


**Figure 48** Comparison of former activities in nature conservation 1997-2008, n(2008) = 140, n(1997) = 111



**Figure 49** Comparison of current activities in nature conservation 1997-2008, n(2008) = 140, n(1997) = 111

Interestingly, the employment in the National Park did not cause a significant increase of the engagement for conservation work beyond the defined field of the particular National Park administrations. The qui-square-test allows the statistically secured conclusion that only those persons attend nature conservation work besides their function in the National Park, who has functioned in this field before.

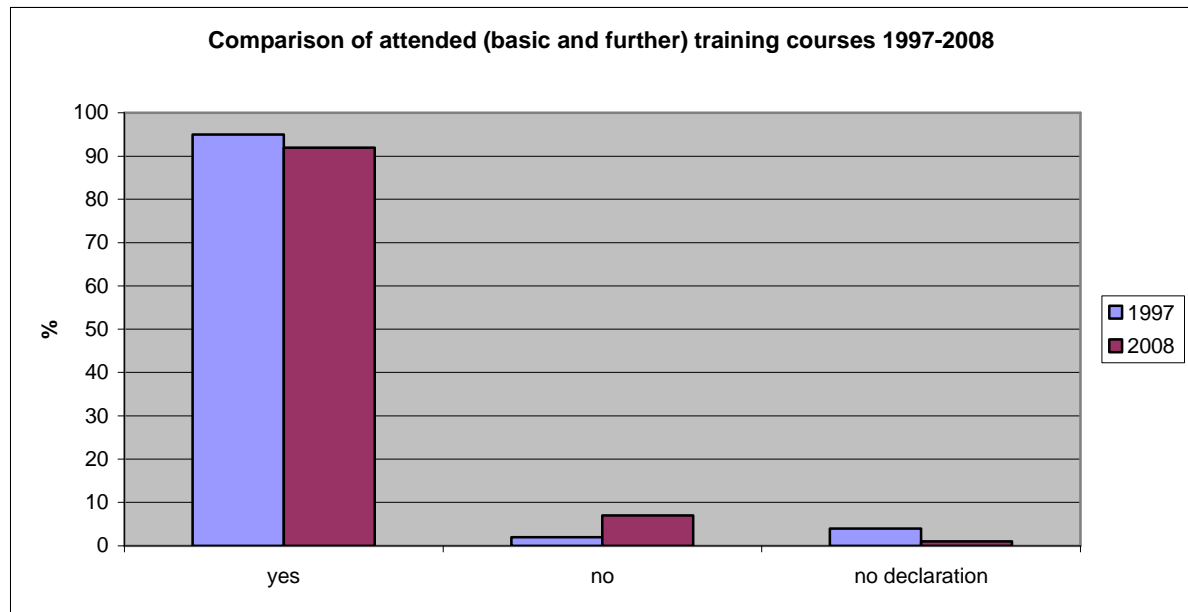


**Figure 50** Crosstab of activities in nature conservation former/current situation,  
 $n(2008) = 140$ ,  $n(1997) = 111$ ,  $p < 0,05$

## 7.6. Basic and further training

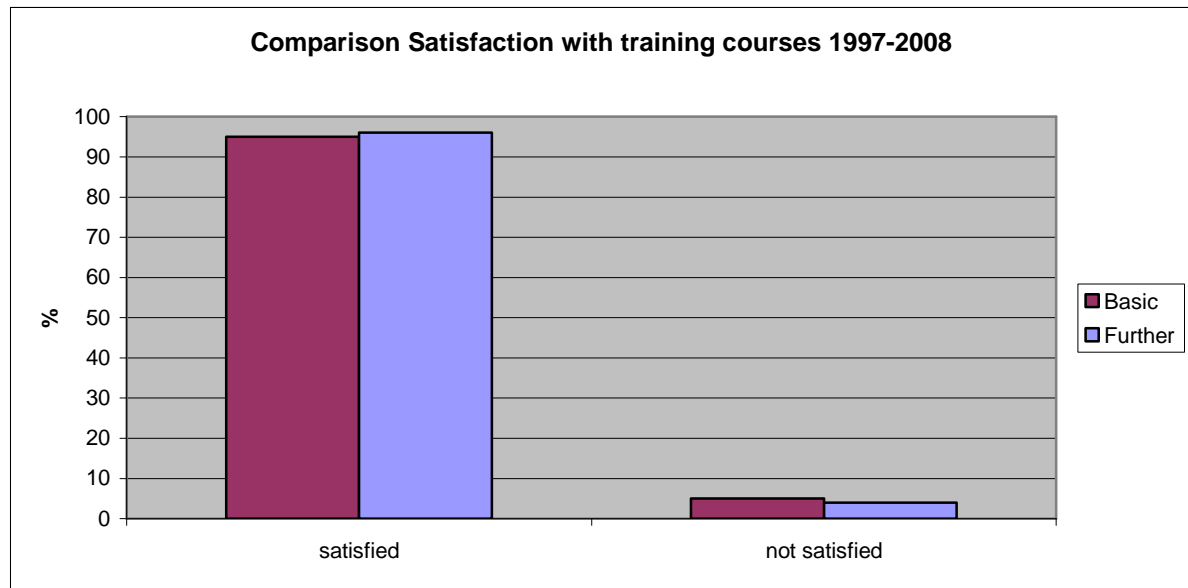
### Attendance of training courses

More than 90% of all interviewed National Park staff stated to have graduated a specific education. In comparison to 1997 these data are virtually level off and show on one hand the high disposition to attend relevant courses and on the other hand the compelling requirement of these courses for the professional function in a National Park.



**Figure 51** Comparison of attended training courses 1997-2008, n(2008) = 140, n(1997) = 111

More than 95% of interviewed persons stated to be satisfied with the quality and content of the basic training as well as of further training courses. This data reflects the high quality of courses, offered by the National Park administration. In comparison to 1997 the satisfaction slightly increased. This compliance is remarkable hence, a great individuality with different previous knowledge and qualifications can be found among the Austrian National Park Rangers. To wrench such a high satisfaction from this variety of characters argues for the efforts of persons, who are responsible for education in the particular National Parks.



**Figure 52** Comparison Satisfaction with training courses 1997-2008, n(2008) = 140, n(1997) = 111

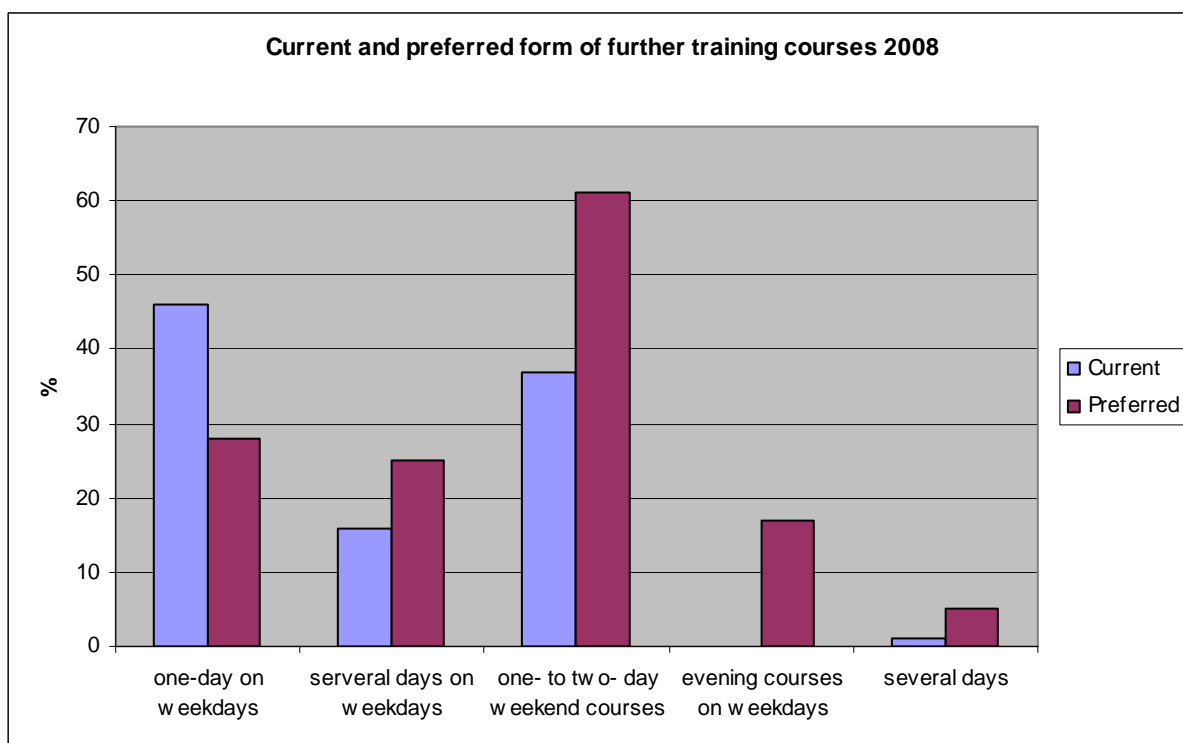
### Time frame of the training

An interesting correlation can be deduced from the time-frame of the basic- and further training. The question about the type of the so far completed basic training is dominated by one- to two days courses on weekends, followed closely by courses lasting several days on weekdays. A similar pattern results from the questions about the **preferable** temporal arrangement of future trainings: weekend-models are dominating too, though followed by a greater distance from block courses lasting at least 5 days, followed again from courses lasting several days during the week. Courses of several weeks rank on the scale of popularity clearly under the area of detection.

The declared number of completed training days per year (no basic training) is between zero and fifteen. The averaged data is 5,2 days per National Park Ranger and year in 2008.



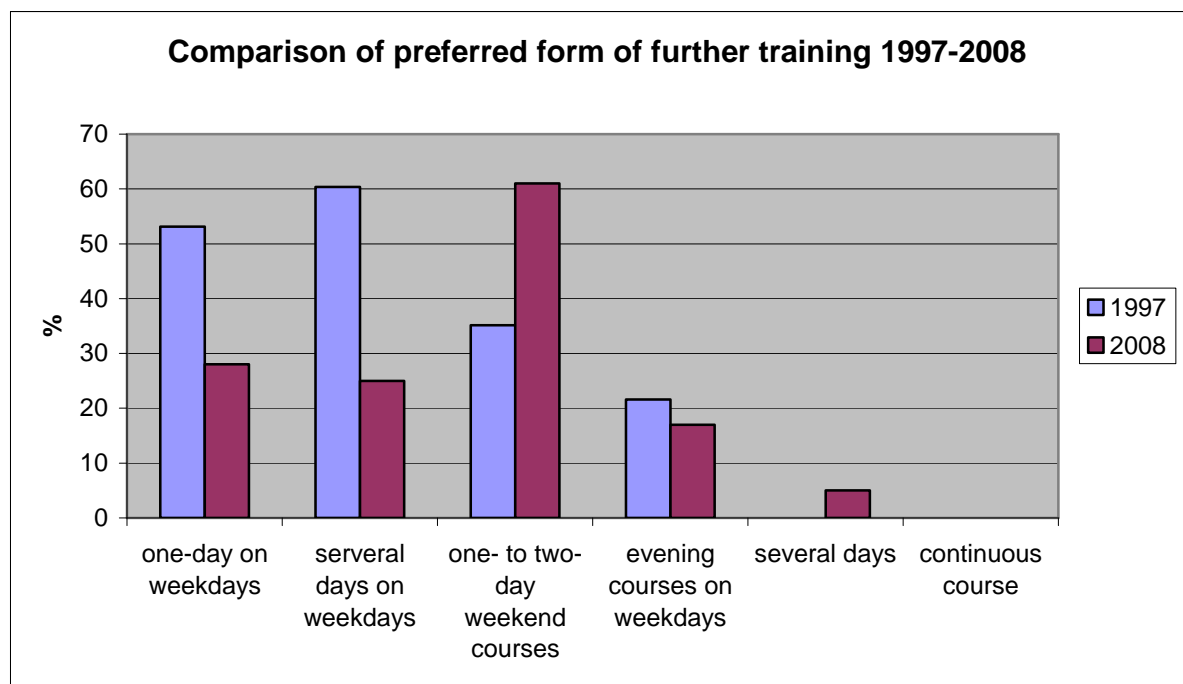
**Figure 53** Comparison of Current and preferred form of basic training courses 2008  
n = 140, multiple counts



**Figure 54** Comparison of current and preferred form of further training courses 2008,  
n(current) = 123, n(preferred) = 140, multiple counts



Even more clearly is the pattern that results from the question about further training seminars within the National Park administration: with more than 60% is the preferred type of one- to two days courses on weekends on the front rank. It's to mention that nearly one-fifth of the interviewed Rangers could fancy evening courses on weekdays to gain additional knowledge. But the reality differs from this pattern, because one-day courses during the week represent the majority. Maybe this difference can be explained by the great amount of part-time employees, who may have problem of compatibility with the current practised type of training. A comparison of this issue from 2008 with the survey of 1997 leaves an interesting question open: the willingness to make use of further training courses during the week was clearly more than 50% in 1997 and decreased more than the half in the past years. Presumably – but statistically not secured – the main reason is the dramatic change in the distance “Residence to National Park” (see fig. 18), as well as a mixture of other different changes in personal circumstances of the respondents.



**Figure 55** Comparison of preferred form of further training 1997-2008, n(2008) = 140, n(1997) 111, multiple counts

## Voluntary optional qualifications

The willingness to complete optional additional qualifications besides the „regular“ basic- and further training is exceedingly high among the National Park Rangers. 80% of respondents stated to have gained an additional qualification within their function for the particular National Park administration.

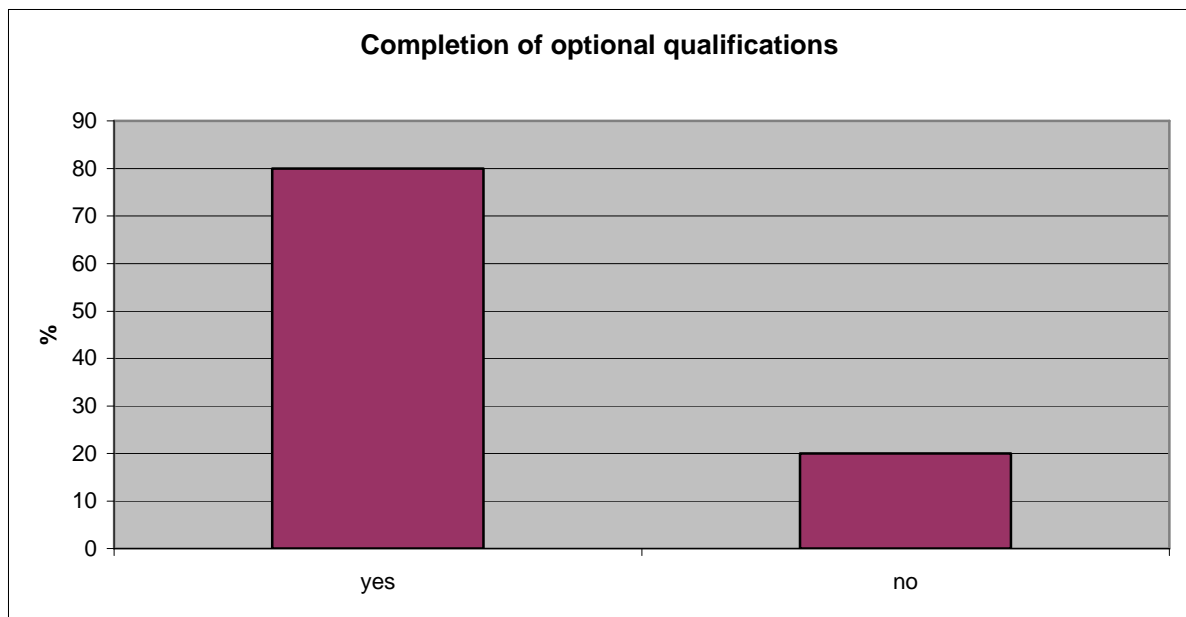


Figure 56 Completion of optional qualifications, 2008, n = 137

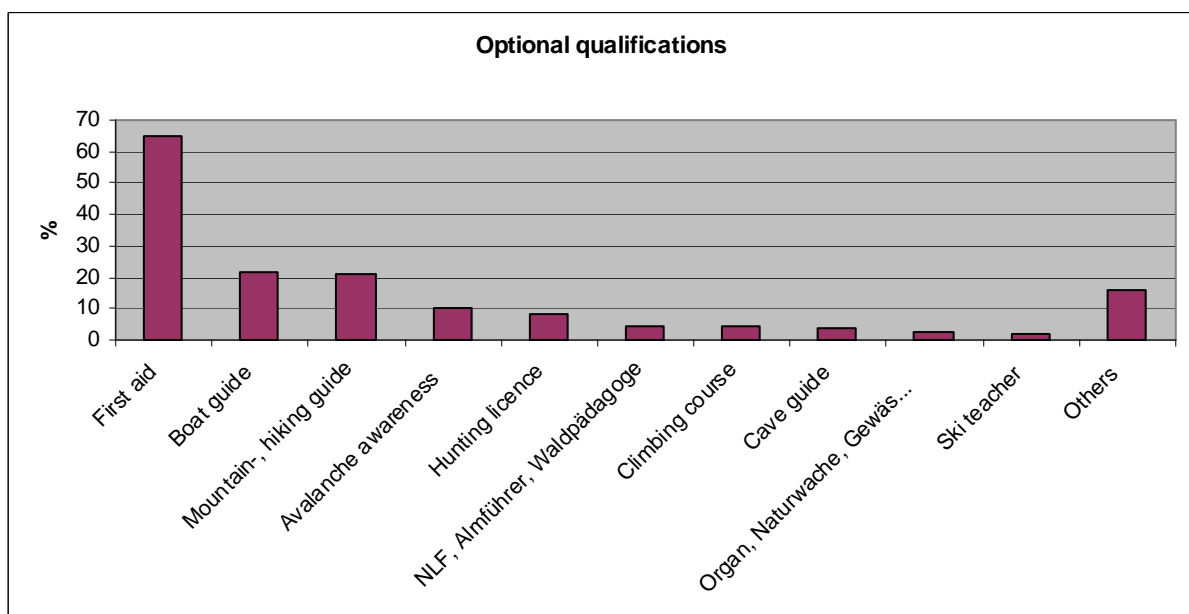
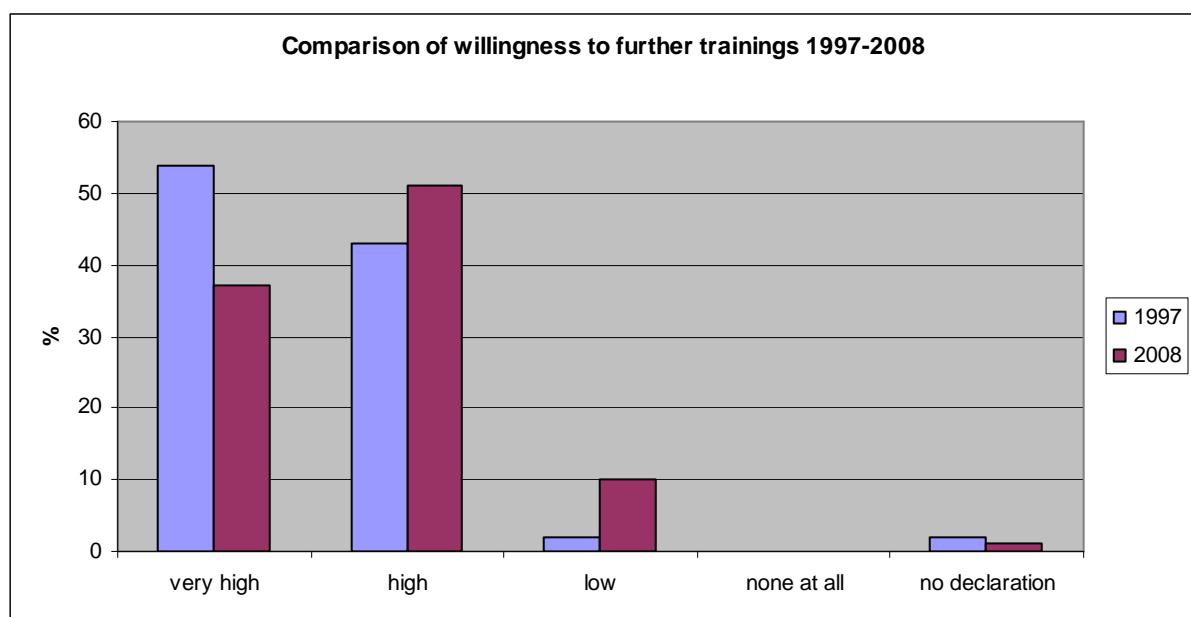


Figure 57 Optional qualifications, 2008, n = 140, multiple counts

Knowledge in first aid is predominating by far within the completed optional additional qualifications. It must be pointed out, that meanwhile in many National Park administrations these courses are a compulsory part of basic and further training. Depending on the geographical location of the National Park, trainings for boat guides and respectively for the spectrum of alpine requirements rank behind first aid courses.

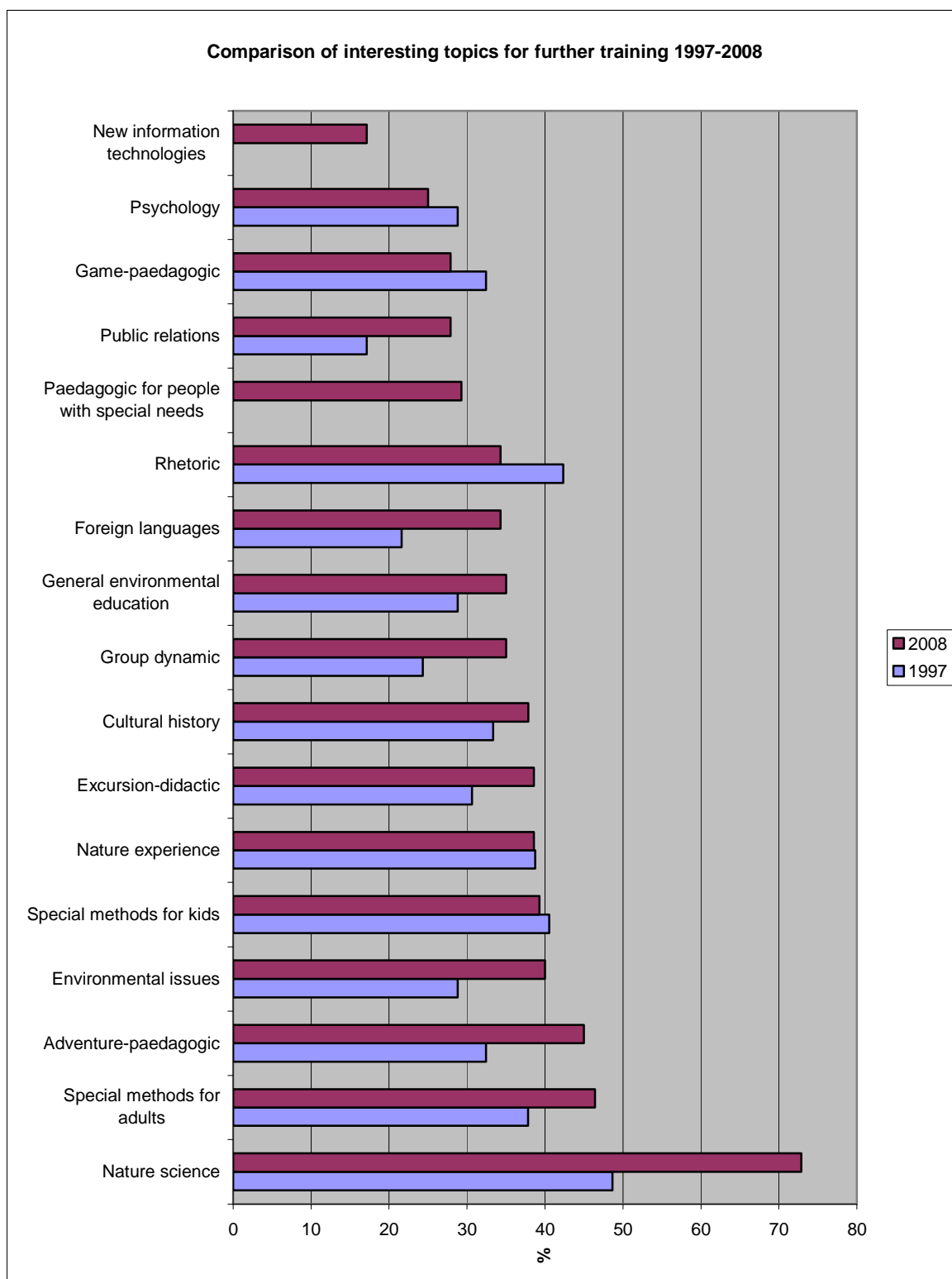
Altogether the general willingness for further training within the National Park activity decreased slightly in comparison to 1997, anyhow, with almost 90% a high till very high willingness exists.



**Figure 58** Comparison of willingness to further trainings 1997-2008, n(2008) = 140, n(1997) = 111

### Topics for further training

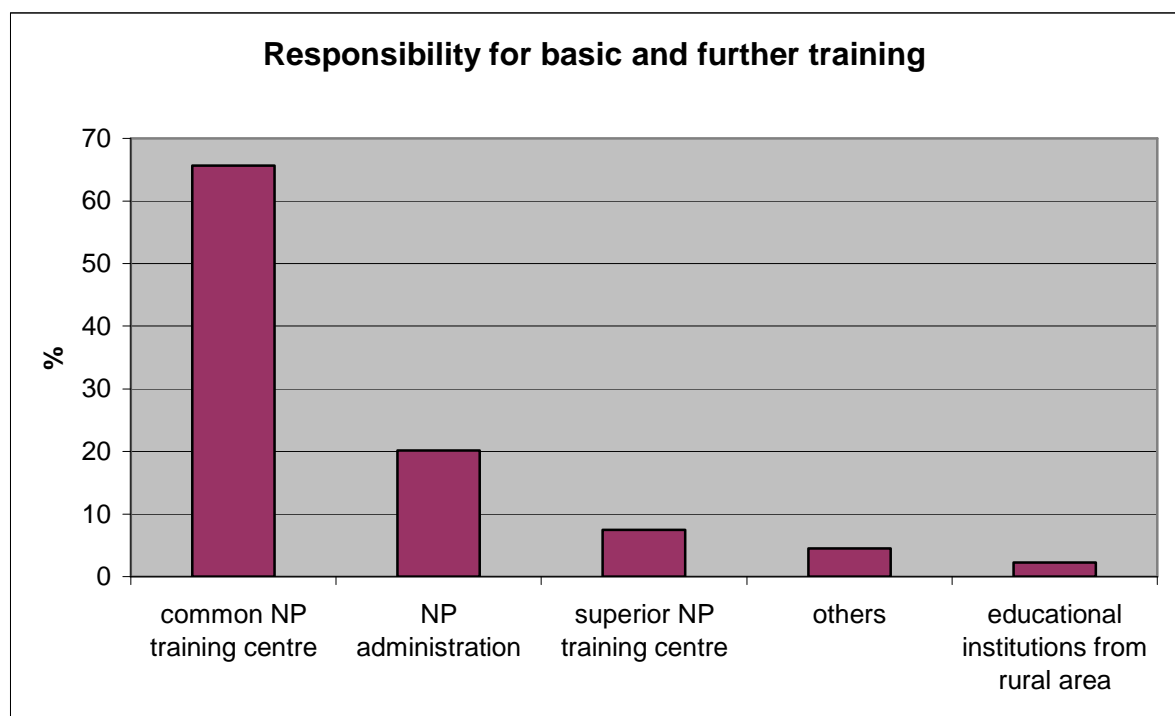
Like 1997 nature scientific knowledge ranks first in the question about preferred topics of basic- and further training courses, but with a considerably clearer advance. On the other ranks are pedagogic methods for the contact with adults as well as experience-pedagogic, whereas the preferentially preferred topics from 1997, rhetoric and special methods for kids, are now ranking in the middle-field.



**Figure 59** Comparison of interesting topics for further training 1997-2008, n(2008) = 140, n(1997) = 111

## Common education and training

The question about the preferred responsible institution for basic-and further training in the context of a National Park Ranger's function showed a clear answer. The responsible and arranging institutions should not be the National Park administration, which maybe surprisingly for some persons, but two-third of respondents voted for a common National Park training centre to achieve similar/common training contents, in connection with regional focuses through the particular administrations.



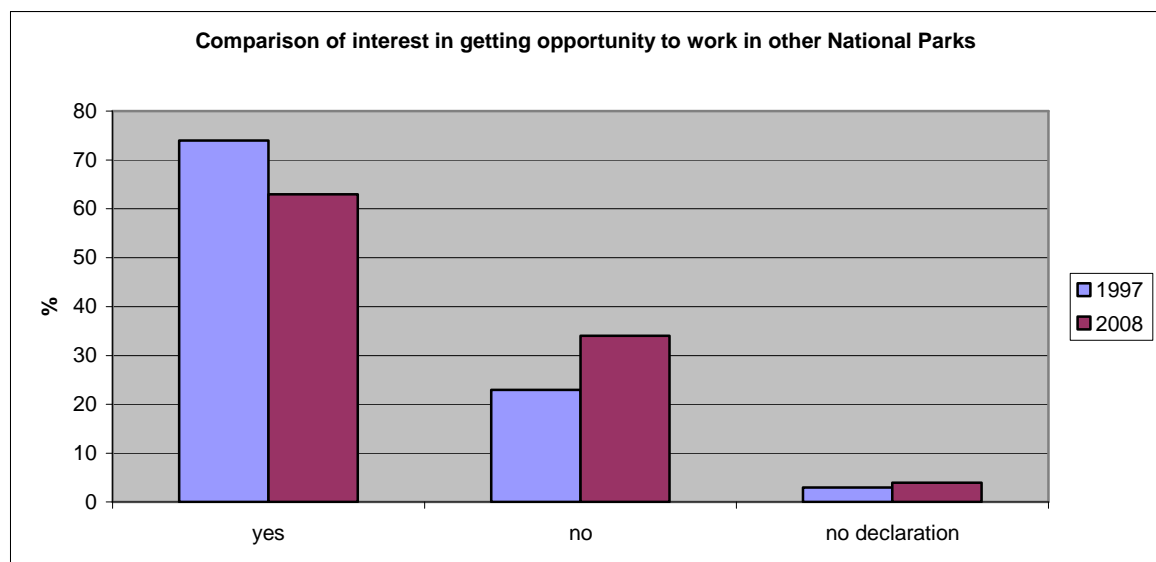
**Figure 60** Responsibility for basic and further training, 2008, n = 134

Following issue is directly connected with this. The question, how an Austria-wide unique basic training for National Park Rangers would be, was answered by almost four-fifths or 78% of respondents with very good or good. The comparison with 1997, when only a bit more than the half were this opinion, makes a clear trend obvious to create province-comprehensive unique training for staff in Austrian National Parks.

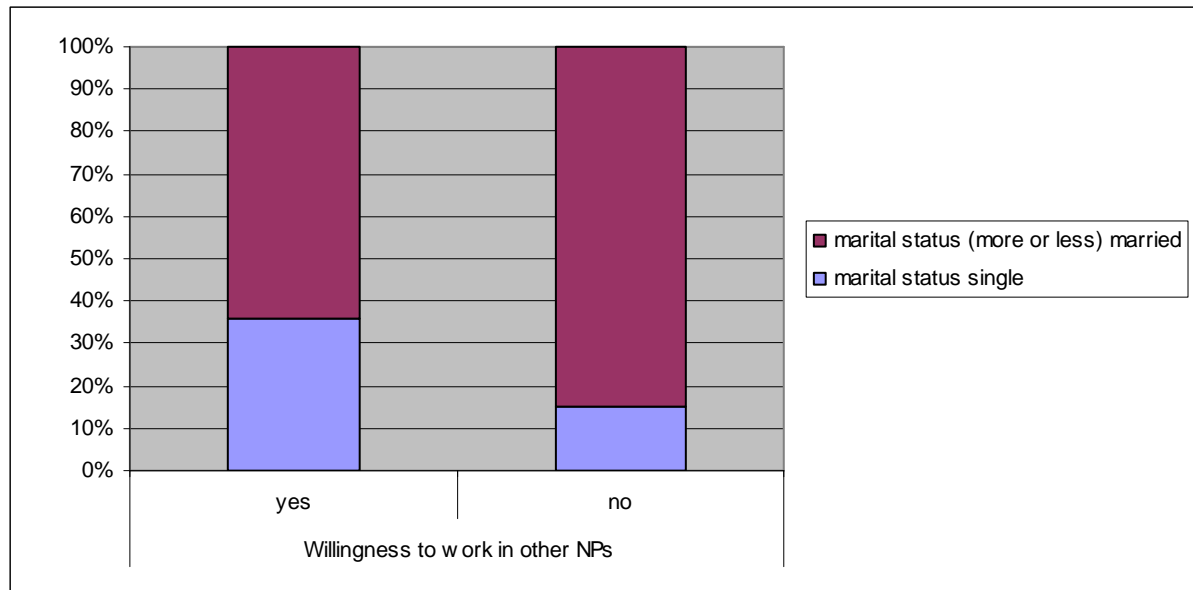


**Figure 61** Comparison of opinion on common basic training 1997-2008, n(2008) = 140, n(1997) = 111

On the other hand, the interest to get the possibility to work at least temporarily in another Austrian National Park has slightly increased in comparison with the survey in 1997: in 1997 three-thirds could fancy an exchange of experience, but in 2008 only two-thirds of all respondents answered this question with “Yes”.



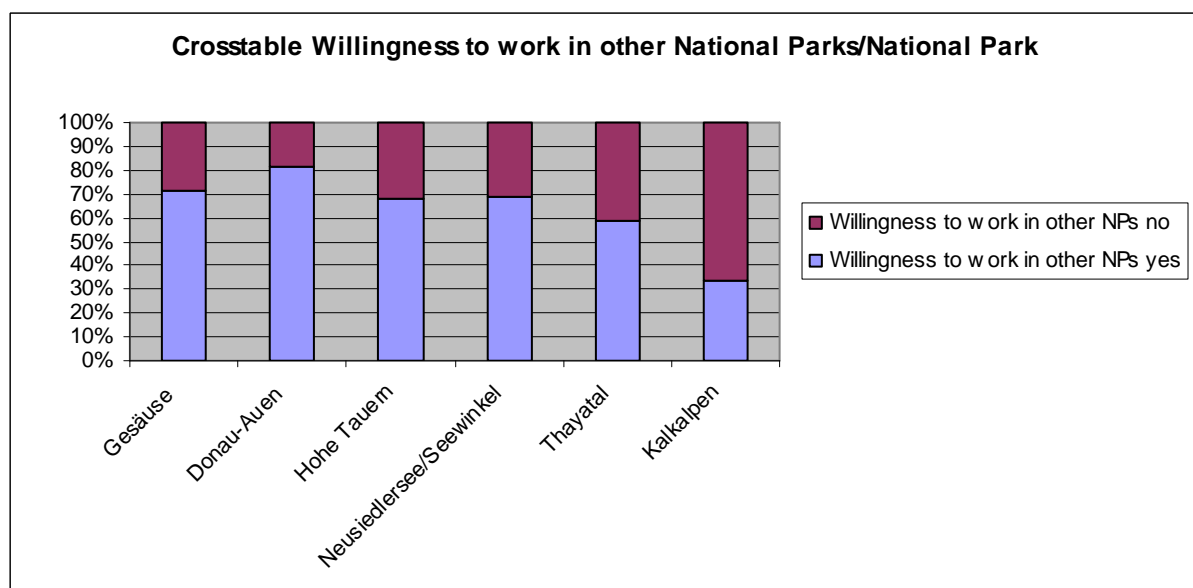
**Figure 62** Comparison of interest in getting opportunity to work in other National Parks 1997-2008, n(2008) = 140, n(1997) = 111



**Figure 63** Crosstable Willingness to work in other NPs/martial status, n = 135, p < 0,05

A less surprisingly connection exists between the willingness to work in different National Parks and the current martial status. Singles are double as much ready to gain experience outside of the own National Park border.

A statistically not secured, but nevertheless interpretable trend is necessary to be elicited out of the willingness in the particular National Parks:

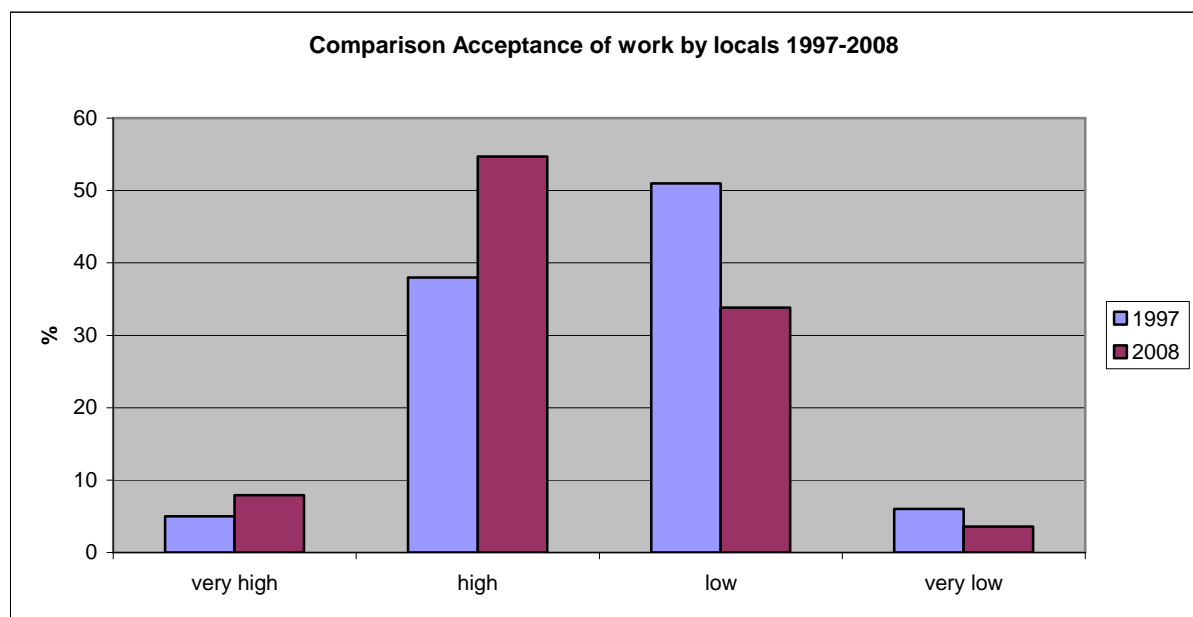


**Figure 64** Crosstable Willingness to work in other NPs/National Park, n = 135

Whilst two-thirds of Rangers from the National Park Kalkalpen see their function also in future within the own borders and do not have a tendency to experience other National Parks working, colleagues from the National Park Donauauen and Gesäuse are especially fond of travelling.

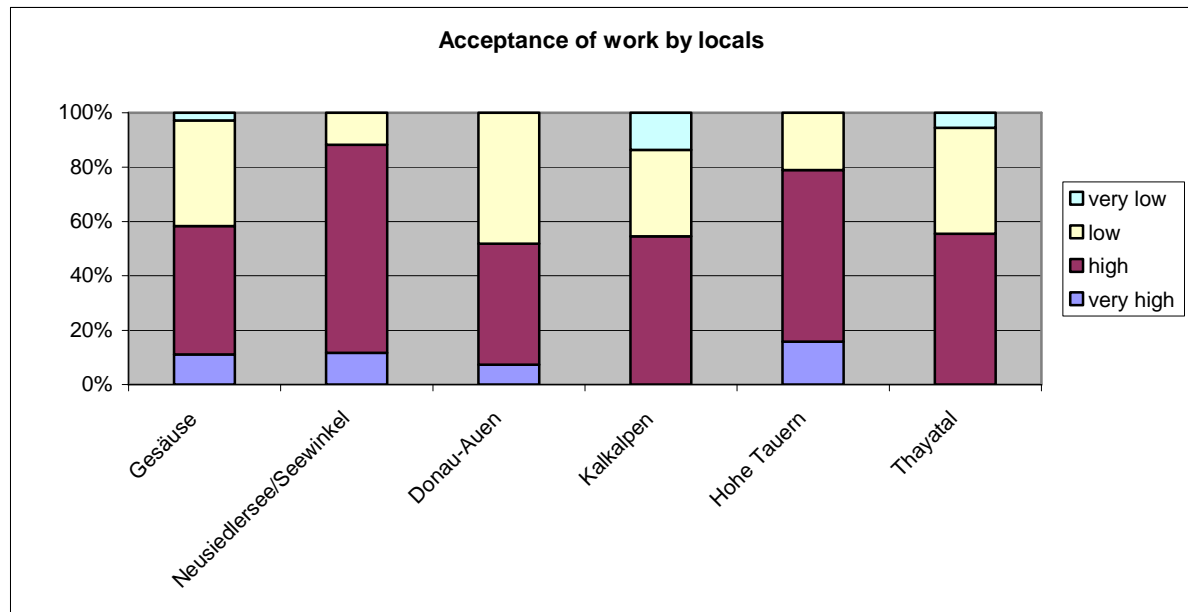
### Acceptance and satisfaction

In spite of the frequent cooperation with local people, interviewed National Park Rangers classify the acceptance of their work as low or high, a very high acceptance is considered in only 8%. However, in comparison with 1997 an enhancement of the general acceptance is resulting: in the eleven years old survey a bit more than the half of all respondents reckoned a low acceptance on the part of locals, but in the year 2008 already 55% assumes a high acceptance by local people.

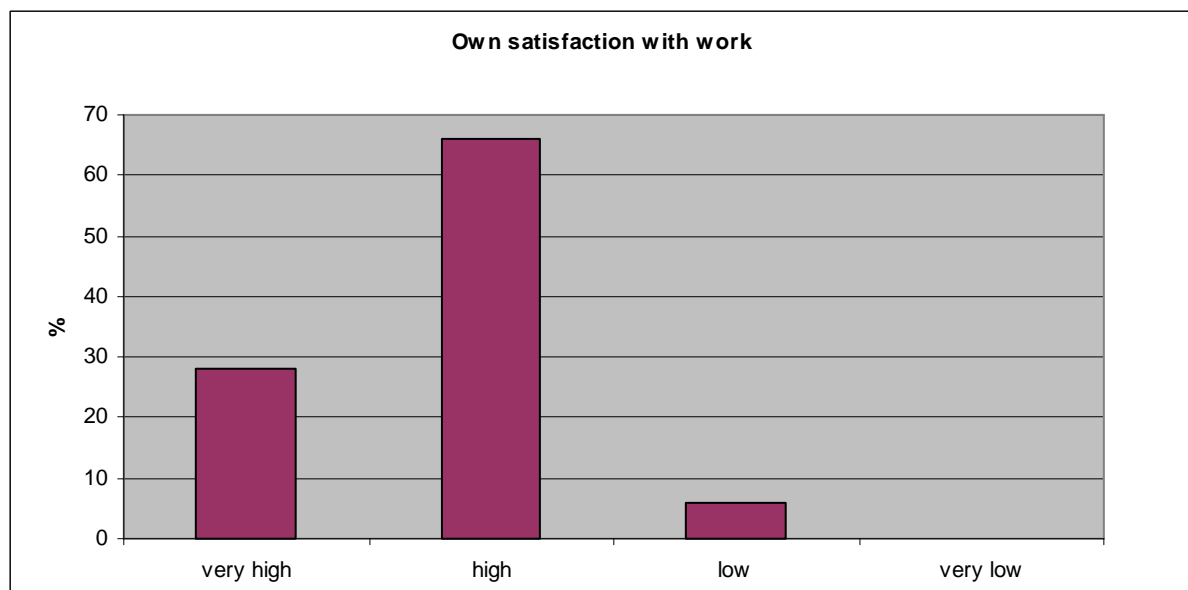


**Figure 65** Comparison Acceptance of work by locals 1997-2008, n(2008) = 139, n(1997) = 105



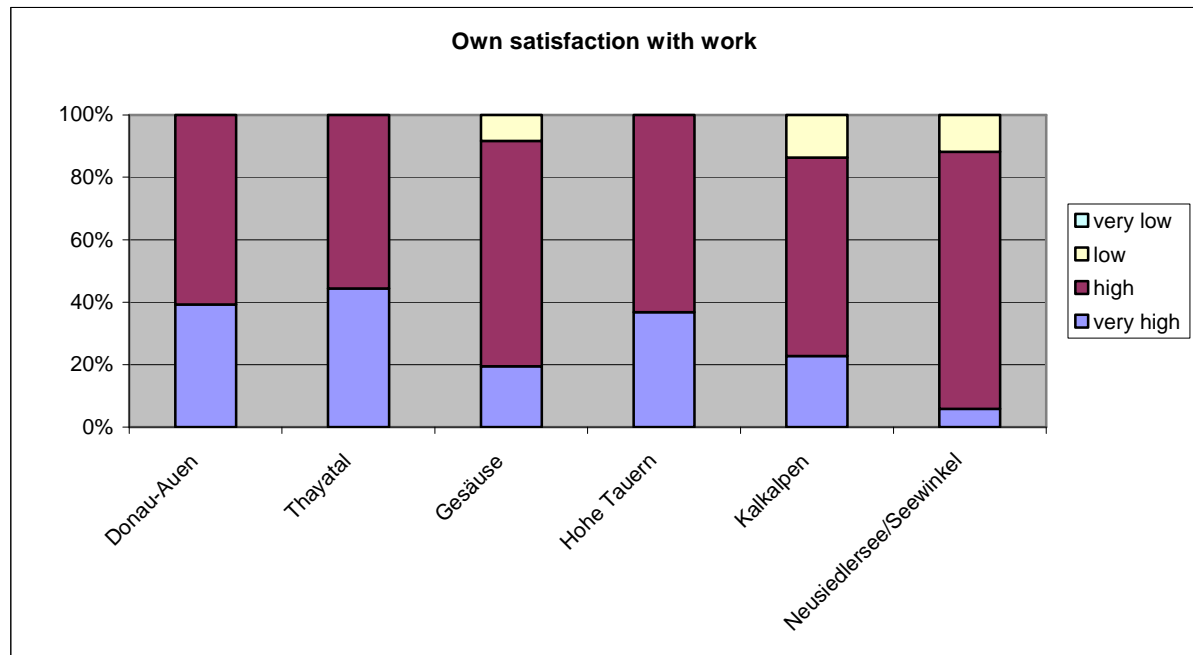


**Figure 66** Acceptance of work by locals / National Park, 2008, n = 139



**Figure 67** Own satisfaction with work, 2008, n = 140

Despite all problems National Park Rangers of different National Park institutions have to cope with, they are clearly and by the majority satisfied with their function. Only five percent – or seven persons – from the National Park Gesäuse, Kalkalpen and Neusiedlersee/Seewinkel stated to be less satisfied.

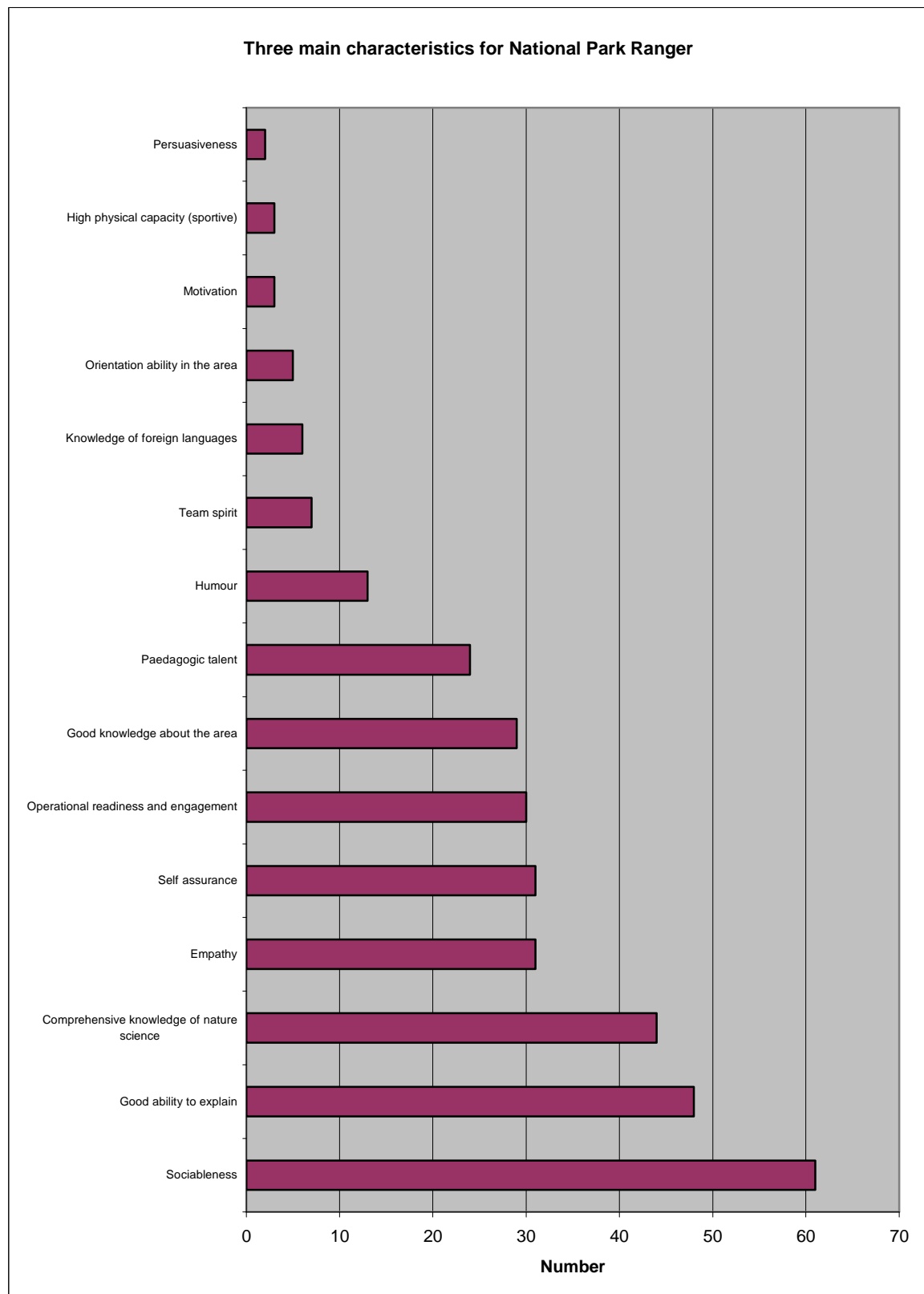


**Figure 68** Own satisfaction with work / National Park, 2008, n = 140

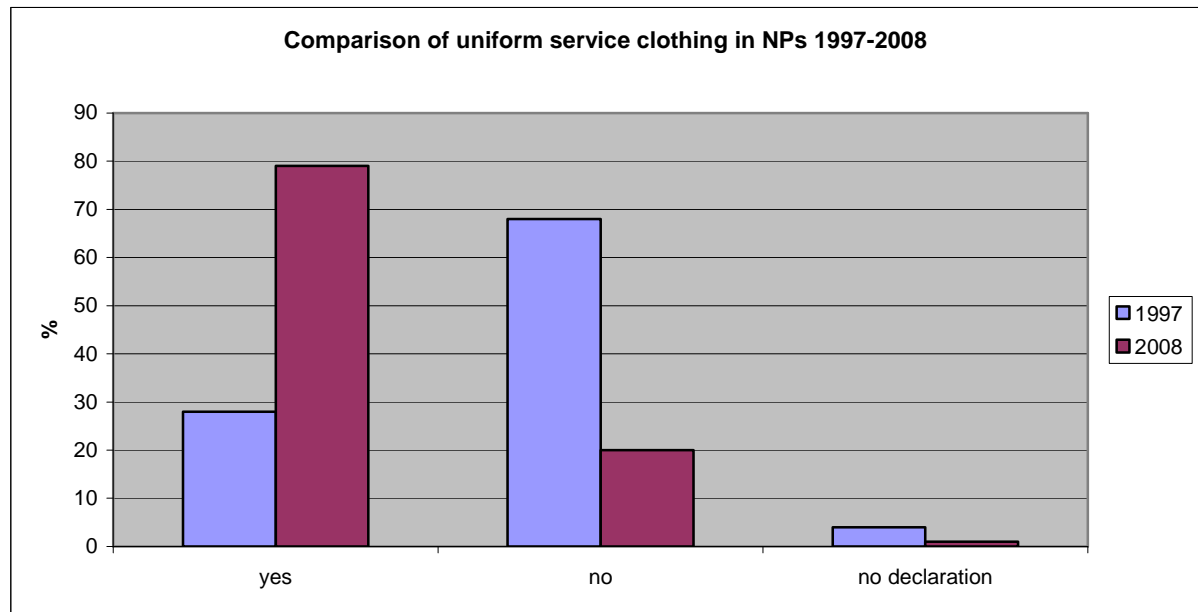
### Personal attributes as requirement for successful visitor assistance

Interviewed persons termed the ability to cope with people (in pedagogic terms as well) primarily, followed by a comprehensive knowledge of nature science. High physical capacity, orientation ability, team spirit and, surprisingly even humour were scarcely attached importance. These results nearly exactly reflect the results from the survey in the year 1997.

Altogether, the analysis describes the basis and formula of successful interpretation: interpretation has to be affecting, touching and fascinating. To be interesting is too less. It has to astonish, give time for experience and cogitation. Interpretation wants to build a relationship between landscape, nature and visitors. Therefore it has to consider phenomenon of nature as well as the needs, expectations and attitudes of visitors – knowledge and experience of National Park Rangers connected with a methodical and conception supplement (Mertin 2008).

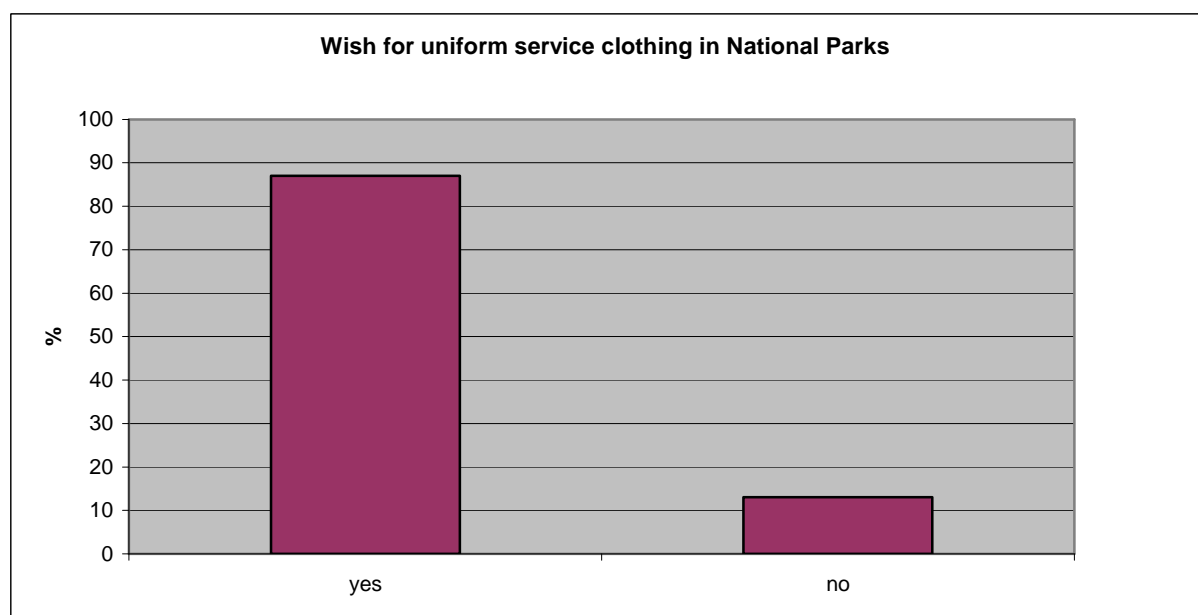


**Figure 69** Three main characteristics for NP Ranger, 2008, n = 140, multiple counts



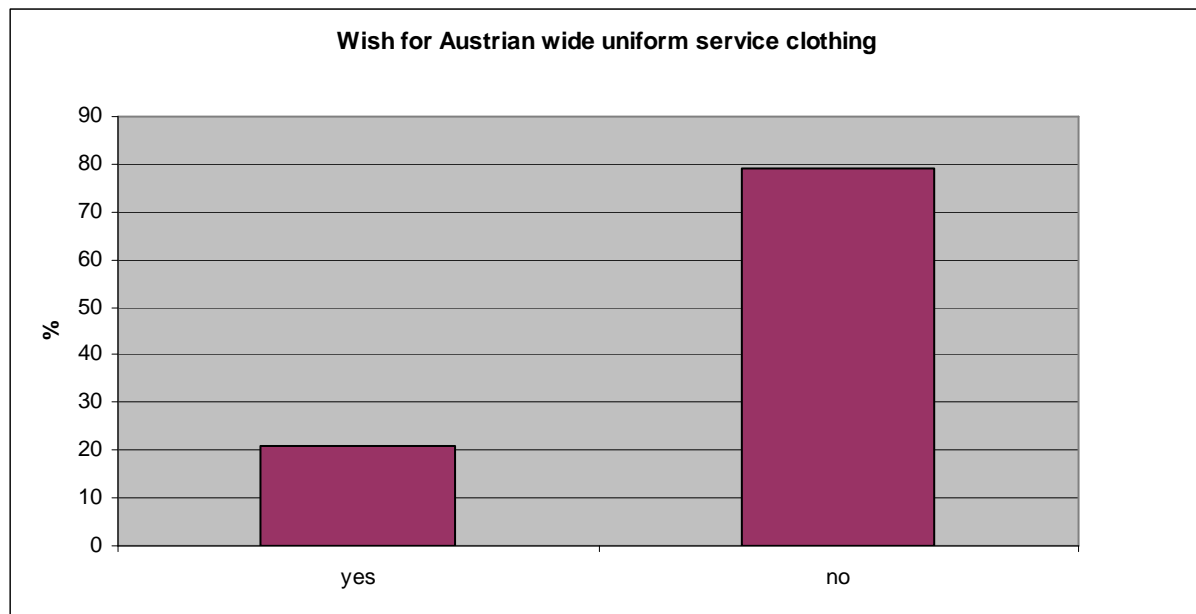
**Figure 70** Comparison of uniform service clothing in NPs 1997-2008, n(2008) = 140, n(1997) = 111

At almost 80% of interviewed persons uniform service clothing is usual, a value, which has been nearly tripled since 1997. Furthermore, nearly 90% of National Park Rangers wish for perpetuation of this situation and respectively an even stricter implementation of uniform service clothing.



**Figure 71** Wish for uniform service clothing in National Parks, 2008, n = 113

A totally contrary pattern shows the question about Austria-wide uniform service clothing. Only one-fifth stated to fancy such compulsive equipment, but the majority appreciates the individual “tag” of the single National Park through National Park specific service clothing.



**Figure 72** Wish for Austrian wide uniform service clothing, 2008, n = 136

Almost half of all respondents would favour the job title “National Park Ranger” as adequate name. Nearly one-fourth would wish for the term “Besucherbetreuer”, and the rest distributes among numerous other terms. So, in comparison with 1997 the increasing “internationalization” of this job is confirmed and with it the connected dependence of the job title on the world-wide usual term “National Park Ranger”.

As measured by replies from the particular National Parks the preferred term “National Park Ranger” is naturally in those Parks most wanted, where this term has already been officially established: National Park Hohe Tauern and Gesäuse. In National Park Neusiedlersee/Seewinkel and Kalkalpen this term is less favoured.

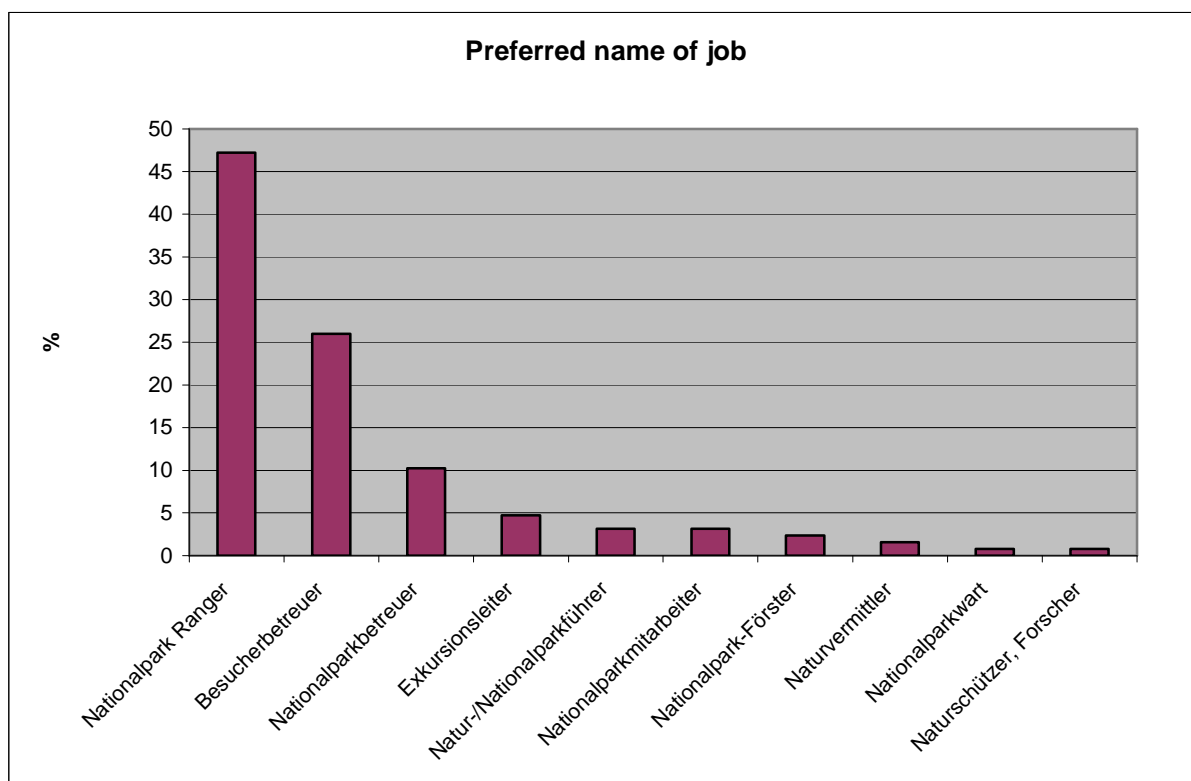


Figure 73 Preferred name of job, 2008, n = 127

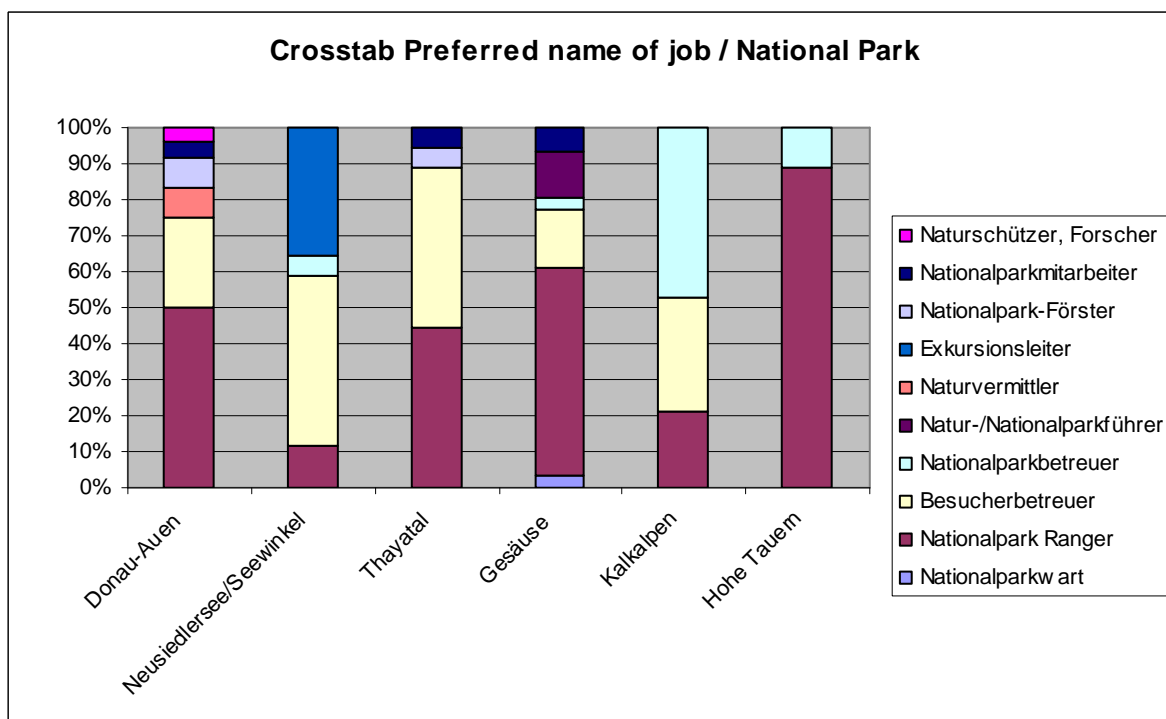
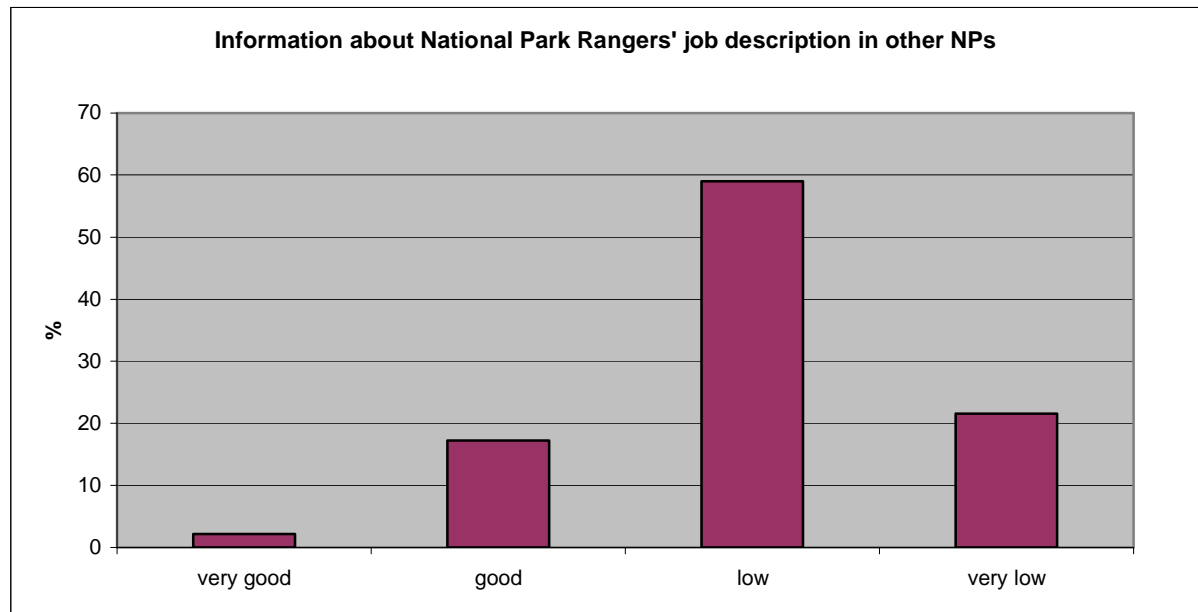


Figure 74 Crosstab Preferred name of job / National Park, 2008, n = 127



**Figure 75** Information about National Park Rangers' job description in other NPs, 2008, n = 139

Only few interviewed persons think that they are adequately informed about activities of Rangers and the existing job description in other sanctuaries like the Swiss National Park, Triglav National Park or National Park Bavarian forest. Only nearly one-fifth answered the question with “very good” or “good” informed.

### Uniform job description in Austria

This question resulted in an overwhelming vote **pro** concerning a uniform job description. 85% of all respondents think it is important to define their function in the particular National Park administration within an Austria-wide uniform job description including a clear description of their tasks, a uniform definition and a compulsory training standard. The greatest encouragement, based on absolute numbers, can be found in National Park Hohe Tauern and Thayatal, the least enthusiasm is in National Park Neusiedlersee/Seewinkel.

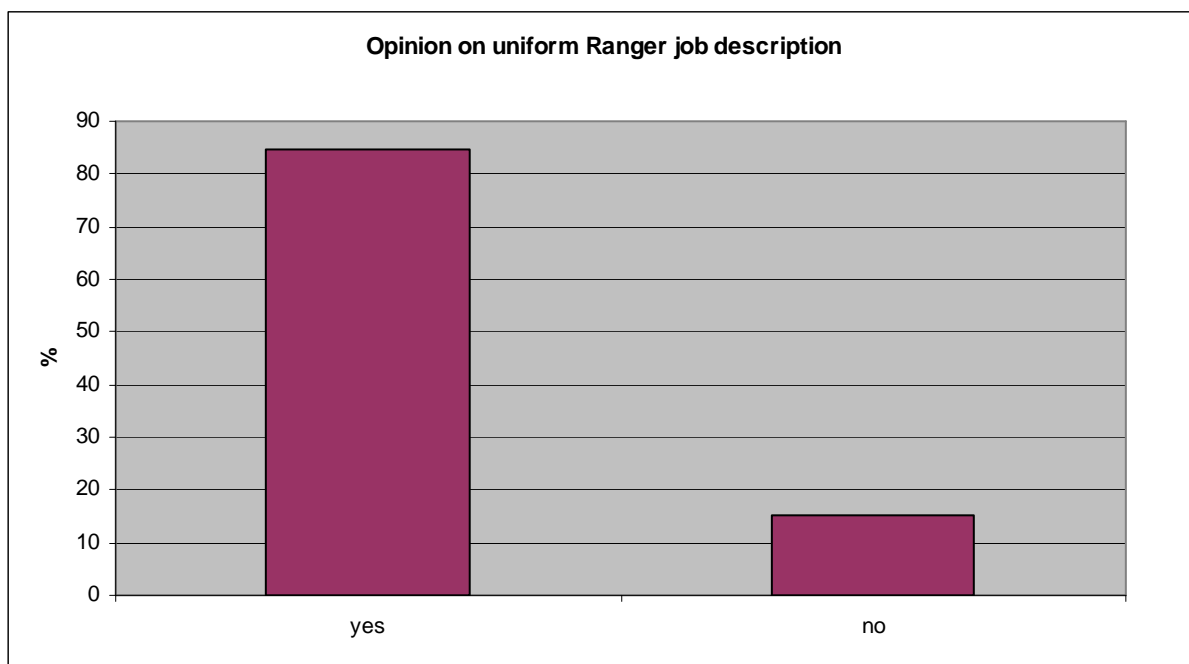


Figure 76 Opinion on uniform Ranger job description, 2008, n = 132

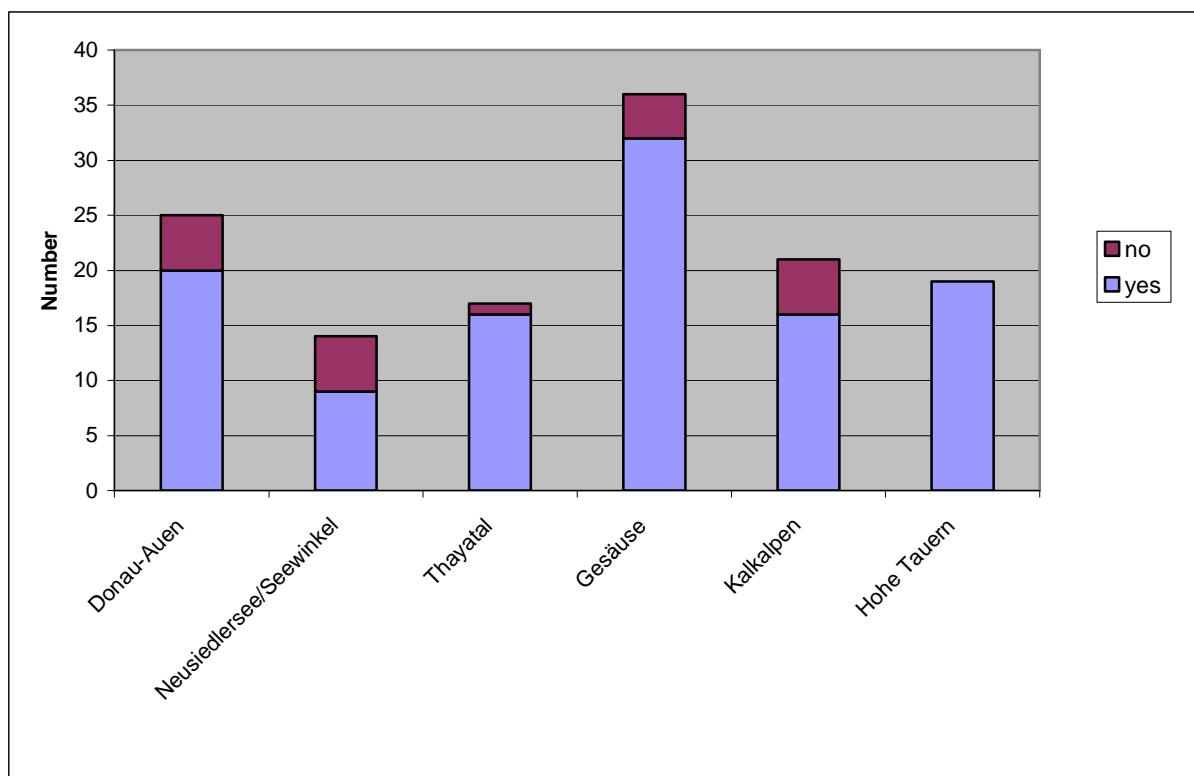
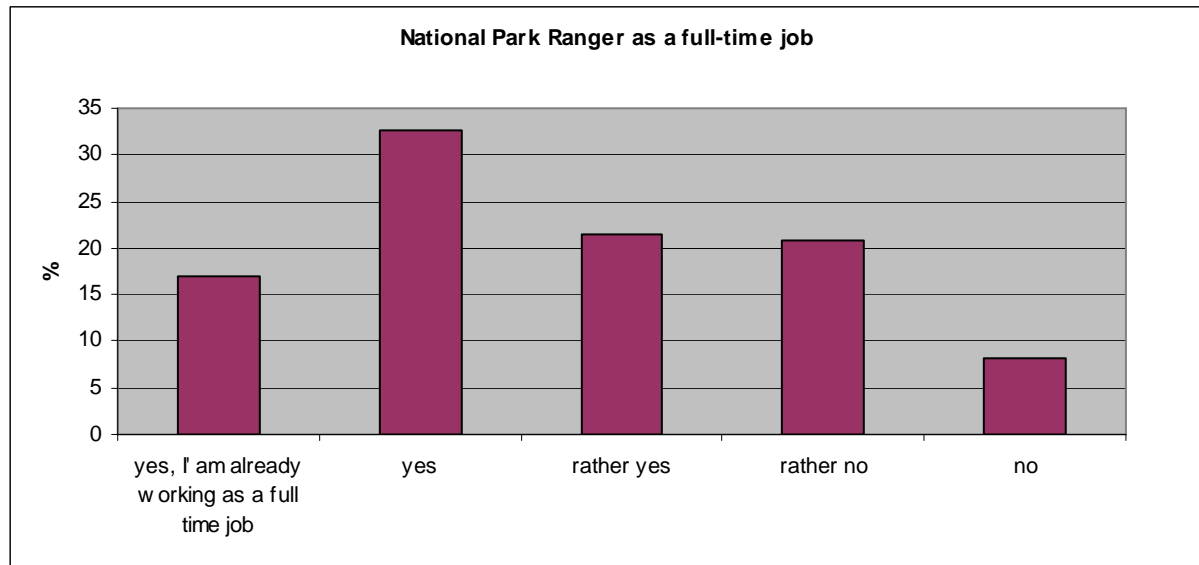


Figure 77 Crosstab Uniform Ranger job description / National Park, 2008, n = 132

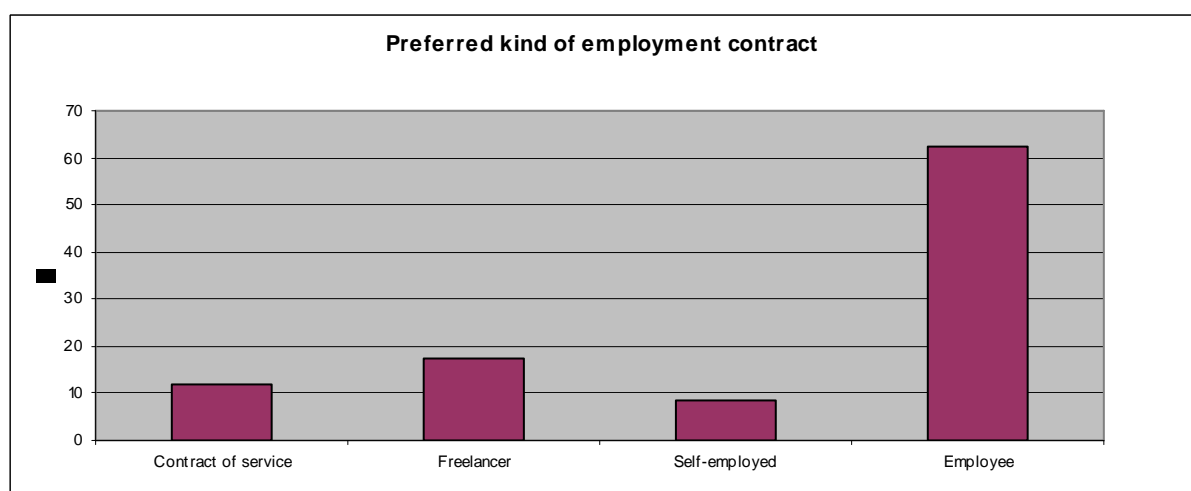




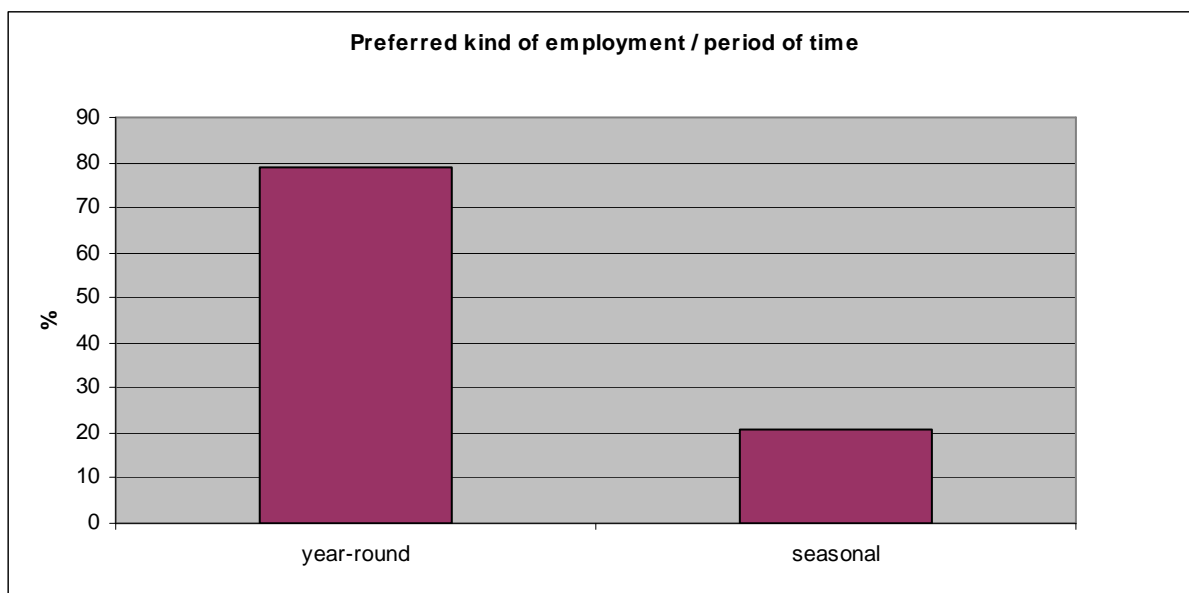
**Figure 78** Imagine to carry out the function as National Park Ranger as a full-time job, 2008, n = 135

For just 17% of respondents the activity as National Park member is an expletive year-round-occupation. More than 50% could imagine exceeding work beyond the recent employment situation, if according requirements exist. Only scarcely one-third is satisfied with the current situation and would not like to get a year-round-occupation in form of a fixed employment in future.

With nearly two-third the year-round employment is the preferred type of future employment contracts.

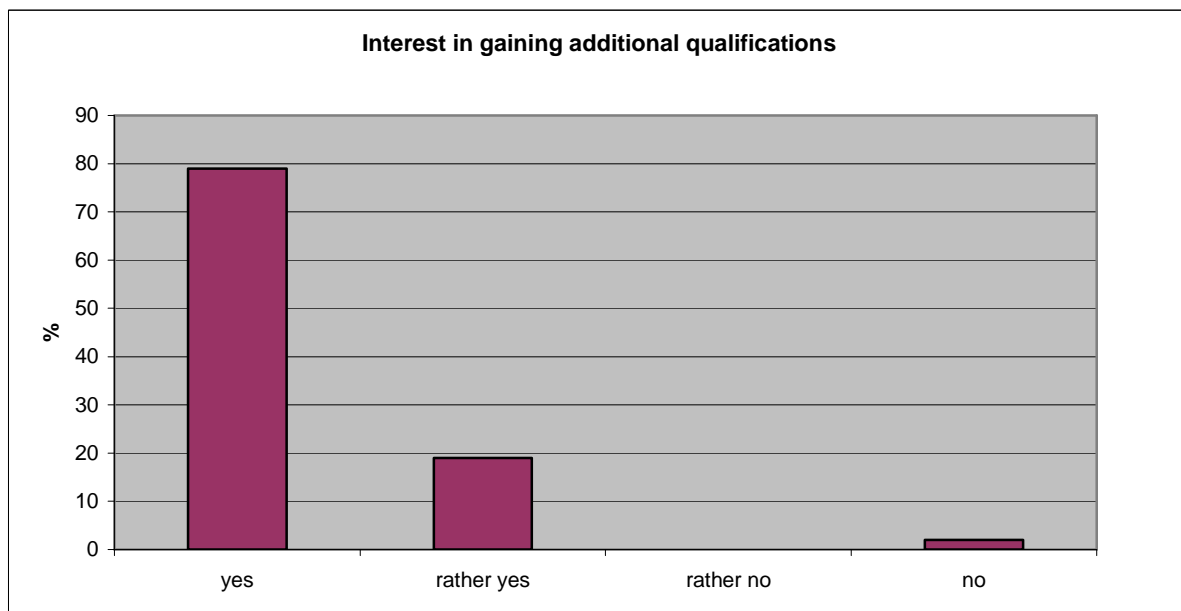


**Figure 79** Preferred kind of employment / period of time, 2008, n = 87



**Figure 80** Preferred kind of employment / period of time, 2008, n = 87

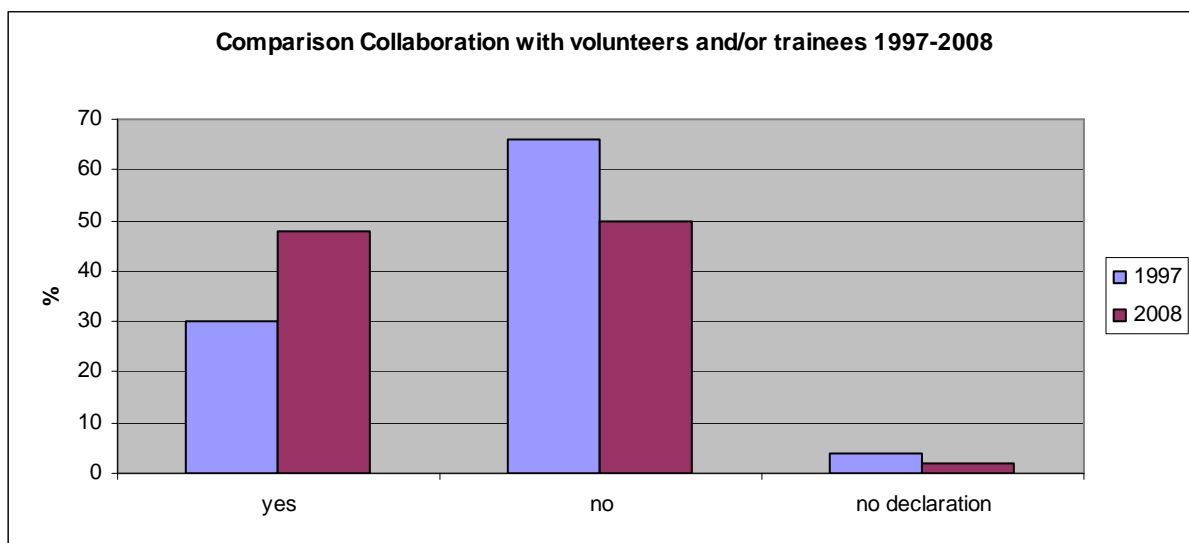
Almost all National Park Rangers, interested in a year-round employment, are willing to gain additional qualifications besides the normal training, like e.g. technical training, hunting license or other. This is definitely an evidence for the enormous and ambitious enthusiasm of the respondents.



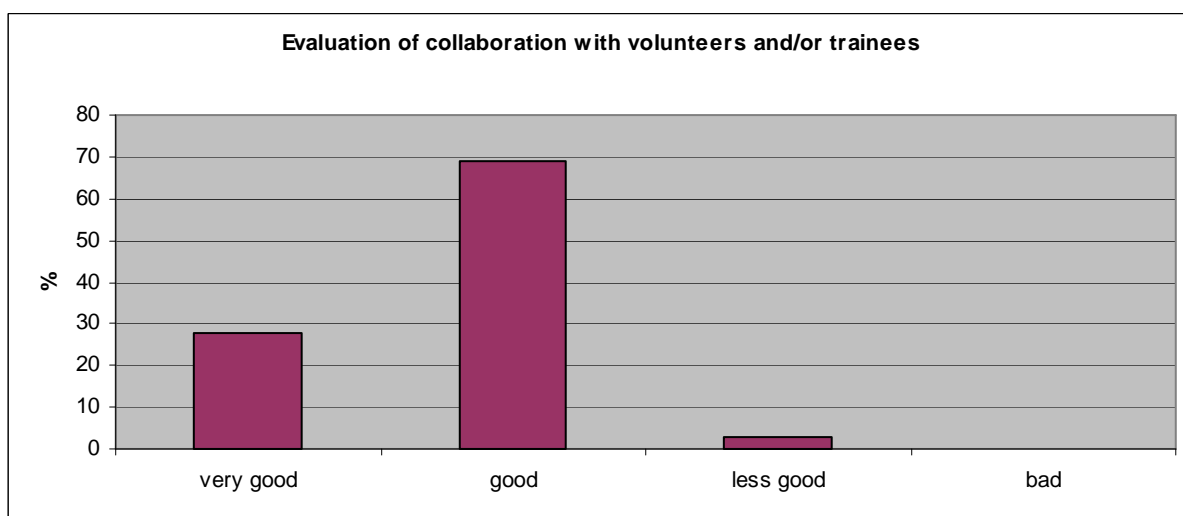
**Figure 81** Interest in gaining additional qualifications, 2008, n = 93

### 7.7. *Miscellaneous, opinions and further annotations of the queried National Park Ranger*

In comparison with 1997 a significantly increased number of National Park Rangers in all administrations is collaborating with volunteers and/or trainees – about 50% of respondents. Virtually each of these persons stated that the co-operation is very well or well working.

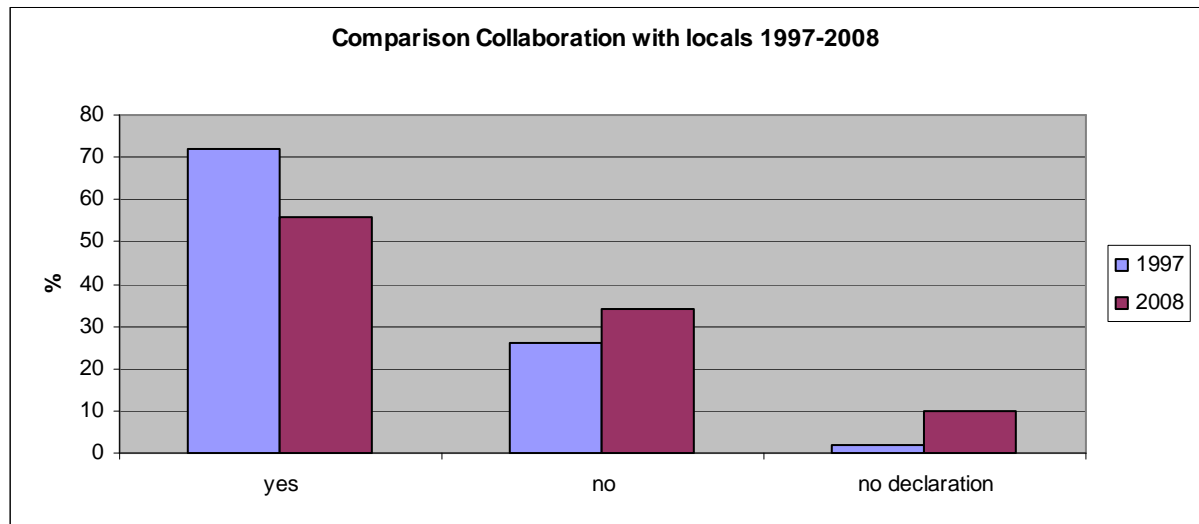


**Figure 82** Comparison Collaboration with volunteers, etc. 1997-2008, n(2008) = 140, n(1997) = 111

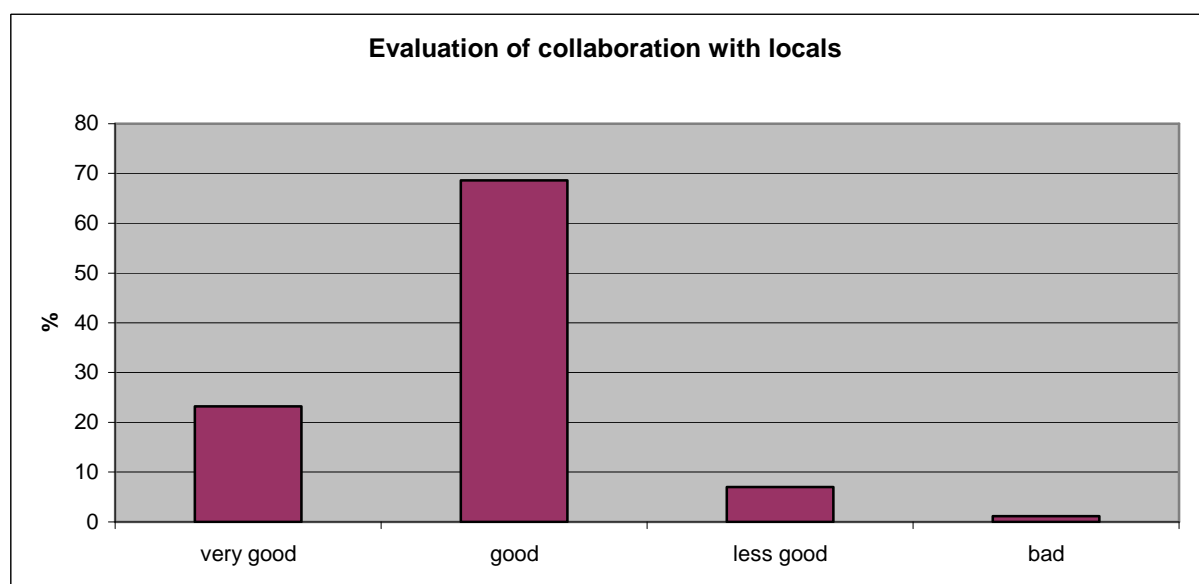


**Figure 83** Evaluation of collaboration with volunteers, etc., 2008, n = 67

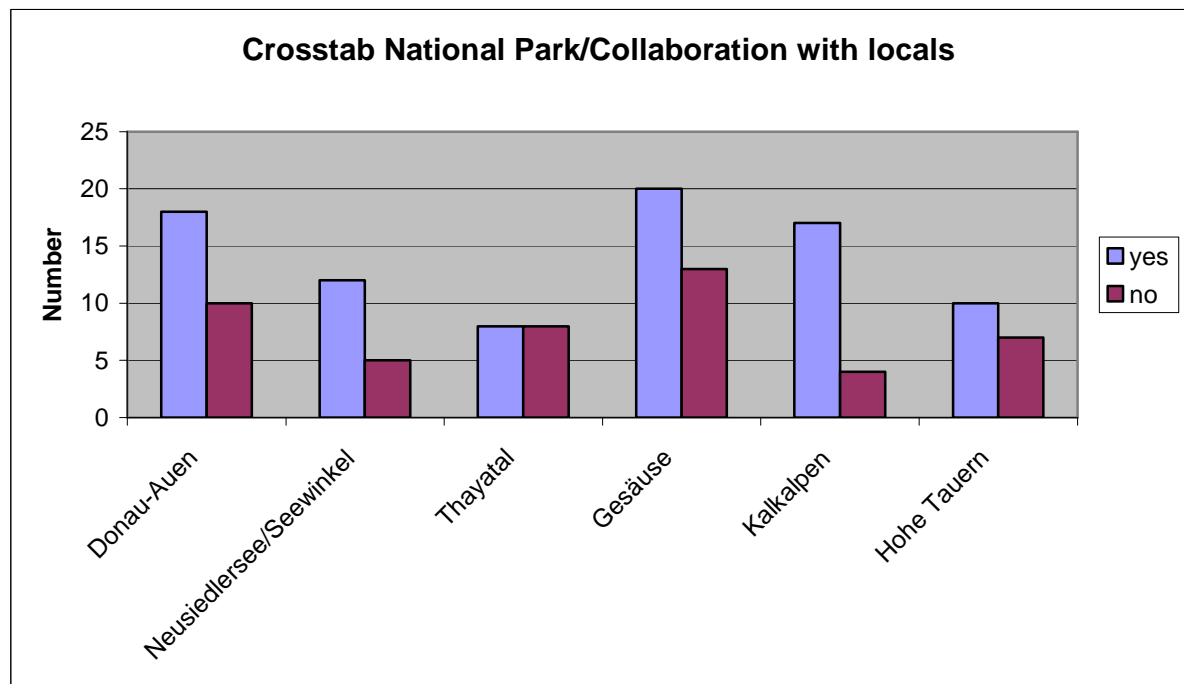
On the other hand the number of employed persons in National Park, who are co-operating with locals, decreased. While 1997 still about three-quarters of all respondents stated to be in brisk professional contact with resident people, has it been just a bit more than the half in the year 2008, to a great extent in National Park Kalkalpen, Donauauen and Neusiedlersee/Seewinkel. More than 90% of evaluated replies were the opinion, that this collaboration would be very good or good; only 8% of respondents reckon that the collaboration would work less good or would not work.



**Figure 84** Comparison Collaboration with locals 1997-2008, n(2008) = 140, n(1997) = 111



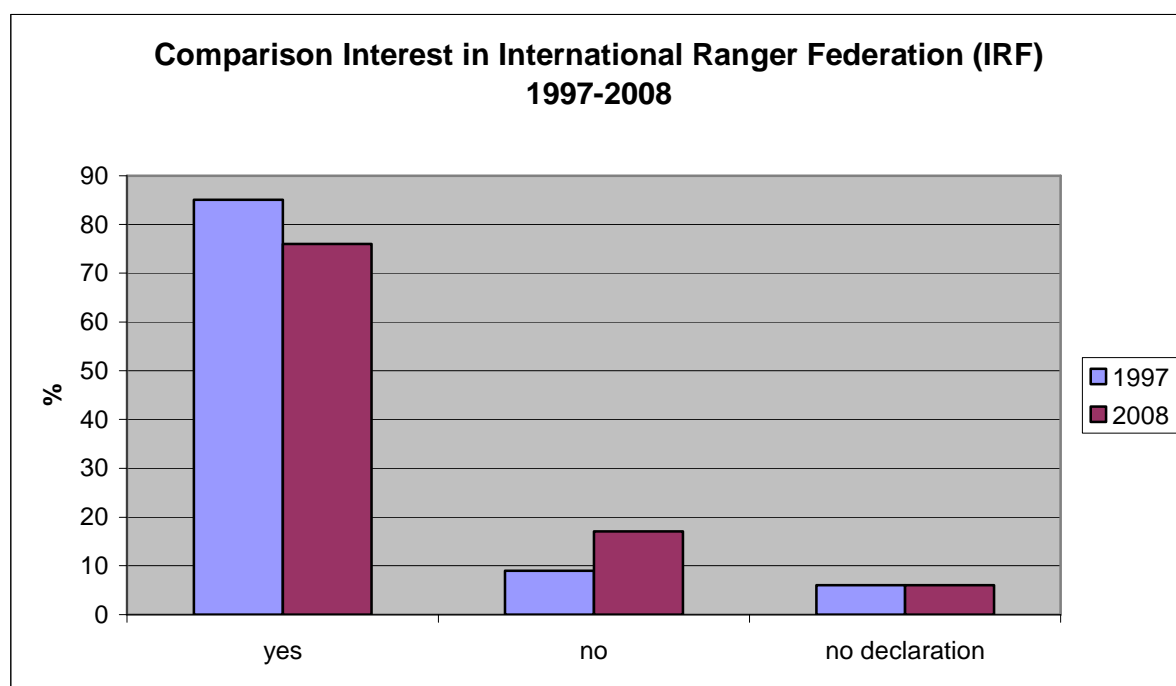
**Figure 85** Evaluation of collaboration with locals, 2008, n = 86



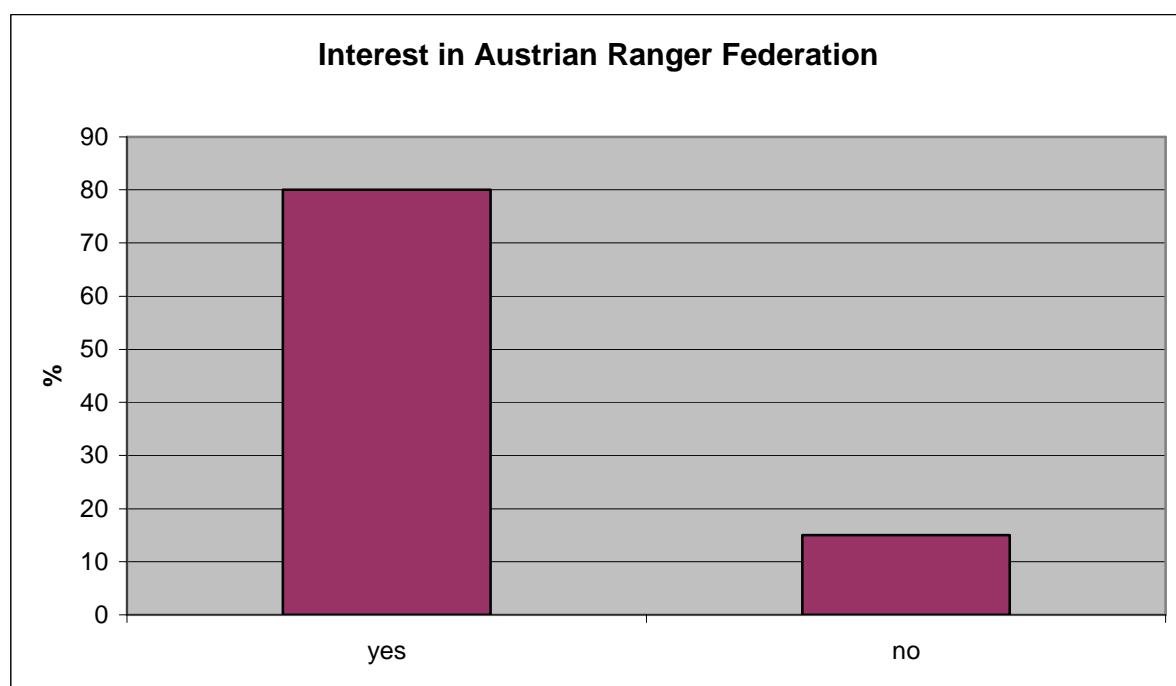
**Figure 86** Crosstab National Park / Collaboration with locals, 2008, n = 132

Three-quarters of all interviewed National Park Rangers are interested in an exchange with colleagues from abroad in context with an “International Ranger Federation” (IRF) to get some information about different topics, to do some common activities and respectively gather for meetings. This value also reflects the current result of the question about the level of information regarding activities in other sanctuaries (see above). Compared to 1997 the willingness to participate in an international federation declined about 10 percent.

The interest to become a member of a comparable federation on an Austrian-level, which content and aims are the exchange among staff of National Parks, road shows and common activities and much else, is with 80% agreement stunning high.



**Figure 87** Comparison Interest in International Ranger Federation 1997.2008,  
n(2008) = 140, n(1997) = 111



**Figure 88** Interest in Austrian Ranger Federation, 2008, n = 140

## **7.8.      *Opinions and comments of National Park Rangers***

The polled National Park Rangers were asked to write down their opinions, wishes, comments or concerns at the end of the questionnaire.

Some statements were mentioned several times under the term of context, relating to this the number of nominations are in bracket.

### **Job description**

- ✓ Establishment of one job description is a good idea and very important (12);
- ✓ A Union of Upper Austrian National Park guardians already exists;
- ✓ The standardization following the example set by Americans would be desirable;
- ✓ Too old for personal commitment (5);
- ✓ Never or only rarely active as classical „Ranger“ (3);

### **Education**

- ✓ The NP administration (Kalkalpen) should train a few suited NP Betreuer well, commit them professionally closer and try to achieve better quality in this way. Without great, sustainable input in the area of education, it will further be sparsely developed;

### **Equipment/payment**

- ✓ Fee rates are too small; there is no kilometre allowance and tour times are different (temporally). Many material had/has to be purchased by oneself, even the uniform (Kalkalpen) mostly had to be paid by oneself. “But: Who else is lucky to look at pictures from a working day and is happy about it.”
- ✓ Every work with people is based on the voluntariness to consume this offer. To make these possible, love to nature and nature conservation has to become

comprehensible for our „customers“ and has to be seen as necessity! But to sense this necessity, much image work has to be accomplished, for why should a human think about hunger, if his/her fridge is basically full to the brim! But for us, the Rangers outdoor, this wonderful and challenging work can only be successful, if we have enough possibilities to fulfil our guest's basic needs.“

- ✓ Carfare would be desirable (2);

### **Administration**

- ✓ Own homepage including NP-Ranger's activities is desirable;

### **Criticism**

- ✓ Term “Ranger” bothers, because in Austria should dominate an other language use (2);
- ✓ Sensation, that the interest of locals is confined to financial allowances;
- ✓ Function is too extensive for a side job;

### **Future/requests**

- ✓ International exchange would be desirable;



## **8. Job profile, basic- and further training in Austrian National Parks**

To get information about the current education situation from the National Parks' point of view, between December 2007 and May 2008 interviews were carried out with the particular officer for education. These were following persons in particular: DI Mathias Kuhn (Donauauen National Park), Christian Übl (Thayatal National Park), Mag. Angelika Stückler (Kalkalpen National Park), Ferdinand Rieder (Hohe Tauern National Park), DI Harald Grabenhofer and Michael Kroiss (Neusiedlersee/Seewinkel National Park). On this way I want to thank them a lot for their help. According numbers and documents from National Park Gesaeuse originate from my personal function in the department of nature- and environmental education.

All interviews, which lasted between 50 minutes and two hours, were carried out by the means of a question catalogue and digitally reported. In the next step particular National Parks were directly compared by presenting the results in a clear shape.

Generally it remains to determine, that among all officers for education a high acceptance prevails to establish a uniform job description. The advantages of differentiation compared to commensurable educations (like forest educator or landscape guide) are perfectly obvious and are positively considered by all involved persons. Likewise, there is the argument, to use numerous synergies in course of a uniform basic education, even if the spatial situation and different scenic preconditions point out limits. In this part the particular National Park administration should carry responsibility for special, region-related courses in the future. For the future common further training courses are desired as well as an intensive exchange among single National Park administrations should be aspired.

### 8.1. Number of so far trained Rangers (6/2007)

<b>Donauauen NP</b>	~ 65 Besucherbetreuer
<b>Gesaeuse NP</b>	42 National Park Rangers
<b>Hohe Tauern NP</b>	Presently 17 year-round Rangers, 22 seasonal employed Rangers, 2 in training; 29 Rangers on fee basis or marginal employed;
<b>Kalkalpen NP</b>	~ 65 – 70 National Park Betreuer
<b>Neusiedlersee/Seewinkel NP</b>	~ 120 – 125 Besucherbetreuer
<b>Thayatal NP</b>	10 National Park-Betreuer, 14 school guardians, additional guardians for info-centres

### 8.2. How many courses up to now?

<b>Donauauen NP</b>	3 courses (1992/96-NPI, 2000, 2004), 1 course for ÖBF-staff (1998); courses for service in the visitor centre;
<b>Gesaeuse NP</b>	2 training courses (2003/04, 2005/06)
<b>Hohe Tauern NP</b>	ongoing courses at the National Park Academy/Matrei
<b>Kalkalpen NP</b>	3 own training courses (1993, 1996, 2000) with the collaboration of IFAU, 1 advanced training course by the LFI 2004 (Ländliches Fortbildungsinstitut) for nature- and landscape guides or graduates of the outdoor education seminar
<b>Neusiedlersee/Seewinkel NP</b>	5 training courses so far;
<b>Thayatal NP</b>	2 courses for National Park-Betreuer (1999/2000, 2002/03), 3 courses for school guardians (2000, 2003, 2007)

### 8.3. *Average number of participants*

<b><i>Donauauen NP</i></b>	~ 30 participants
<b><i>Gesaeuse NP</i></b>	First course: 34 participants, following course: 10 – 12 participants
<b><i>Hohe Tauern NP</i></b>	Open basic- and further training courses with 30-50;
<b><i>Kalkalpen NP</i></b>	Own courses: 20 – 22 participants; LFI-course: 7 participants
<b><i>Neusiedlersee/Seewinkel NP</i></b>	~ 25 participants/course
<b><i>Thayatal NP</i></b>	7 – 10 participants/course

### 8.4. *How many Rangers operate at the moment?*

<b><i>Donauauen NP</i></b>	~ 25 Besucherbetreuer (only Lower Austria)
<b><i>Gesaeuse NP</i></b>	~ 25 National Park Rangers
<b><i>Hohe Tauern NP</i></b>	Presently 17 year-round Rangers, 22 seasonal employed Rangers, 2 in training; 29 Rangers on fee basis or marginal employed; (Extern hiking guides );
<b><i>Kalkalpen NP</i></b>	35 – 40 National Park Betreuer
<b><i>Neusiedlersee/Seewinkel NP</i></b>	~ 25 Besucherbetreuer, 10 persons of it are intensive occupied
<b><i>Thayatal NP</i></b>	10 National Park-Betreuer, 9 school guardians, additional guardians for info-centres

### 8.5. *Admittance criteria / job profile*

<b><i>Donauauen NP</i></b>	Word-of-mouth-advertising, announcement, no formal requirements, but mainly persons with a nature scientific background;
<b><i>Gesaeuse NP</i></b>	Advertisement in local media, NP-website, word-of-mouth-advertising; requirements: interest in communication with people and in the nature of the Gesaeuse
<b><i>Hohe Tauern NP</i></b>	Public announcement including a requirements specification; requirement: high social competency, mountain experience, flexibility; alpine foreknowledge, good company with teens;
<b><i>Kalkalpen NP</i></b>	Announcement; requirement: basic nature scientific knowledge, temporal flexibility, good knowledge of the National Park region, experience in communication with groups;
<b><i>Neusiedlersee/Seewinkel NP</i></b>	Announcement; elimination according to qualitative criteria and possible time resources;
<b><i>Thayatal NP</i></b>	Announcement in the National Park-Paper, press announcement and website, persons who are kept; requirements: interest in nature, relatedness to NP Thayatal, no formal criteria;

## 8.6. Selection procedures

<b><i>Donauauen NP</i></b>	Selection procedure through personal interviews;
<b><i>Gesaeuse NP</i></b>	Personal interviews
<b><i>Hohe Tauern NP</i></b>	Sichtung der Bewerbungsunterlagen, Aufnahmeverfahren, schriftliche Arbeit, mündliches Referat vor Kommission, Befragung durch NP-Direktor; Externe Mitarbeiter: ebenfalls Ausschreibung und Prüfungsexkursion;
<b><i>Kalkalpen NP</i></b>	Personal interview
<b><i>Neusiedlersee/Seewinkel NP</i></b>	Intensive Hearing;
<b><i>Thayatal NP</i></b>	Hearing, personal interviews with the officer of education;

## 8.7. NP internal cost account for the a) basic and further training

<b><i>Donauauen NP</i></b>	cost accounting exists
<b><i>Gesaeuse NP</i></b>	cost accounting exists;
<b><i>Hohe Tauern NP</i></b>	cost accounting exists;
<b><i>Kalkalpen NP</i></b>	cost accounting exists;
<b><i>Neusiedlersee/Seewinkel NP</i></b>	cost configuration exists;
<b><i>Thayatal NP</i></b>	cost configuration exists;

### 8.8. *Compulsory / obligatory possibilities for further training*

<b><i>Donauauen NP</i></b>	10 – 15 events/year, compulsory attendance to particular events, e.g. boat guide training, obligatory registration to further training courses is necessary; suggestions of Besucherbetreuer to particular topics are seized on;
<b><i>Gesaeuse NP</i></b>	~ 10 further training courses/year, formal commitment to certain trainings regarding special topics (climbing, snowshoeing) and first aid, as well as attendance to road shows;
<b><i>Hohe Tauern NP</i></b>	2 courses/year with current topics at Ranger's and administration's suggestion;
<b><i>Kalkalpen NP</i></b>	Further training program for a year, 5 – 8 appointments, partly setting of priority lasting several days; road shows; after repeated absence no further engagement takes place;
<b><i>Neusiedlersee/Seewinkel NP</i></b>	1 – 2 further training courses on a voluntary basis;
<b><i>Thayatal NP</i></b>	3 – 5 trainings/year, no commitment; suggestions of Besucherbetreuer to particular topics are seized on;

### 8.9. Possibility for specialisation in different areas of studies

<b><i>Donauauen NP</i></b>	At the moment no special training;
<b><i>Gesaeuse NP</i></b>	Training to become a mountain bike guide, cave guide, raft guide or climbing guide, as well as deepening courses for designated special programs (e.g. willow dome)
<b><i>Hohe Tauern NP</i></b>	Service law, hiking guide, obligatory training to become a mountain- and nature guard; presently further special trainings within employment are not usual;
<b><i>Kalkalpen NP</i></b>	Grant for extern seminars; training to become a nature guard, optional hiking guide training;
<b><i>Neusiedlersee/Seewinkel NP</i></b>	Currently not intended;
<b><i>Thayatal NP</i></b>	The possibility of co-financing of extern courses exists from the NP-administration; own special trainings are not usual because of meagre attendance; National Park Betreuer are sworn to NP-guards and fishing control;

### 8.10. Type of training (period, organisation, etc.)

<b><i>Donauauen NP</i></b>	Five modules at 5 days, additional training days; partly training by the National Park Institute of the Nature History;
<b><i>Gesaeuse NP</i></b>	Weekend courses, block seminars lasting several days, excursions to other sanctuaries;
<b><i>Hohe Tauern NP</i></b>	Yearly basic courses (theory and practice) and further training courses every three years by the National Park Academy; duration of training is three years, compulsory for constantly employed Ranger;
<b><i>Kalkalpen NP</i></b>	Education 1993, 1996 and 2000 was carried out by the institute for applied environmental education/Steyr in co-operation with the NP; modules lasting several days;
<b><i>Neusiedlersee/Seewinkel NP</i></b>	course blocks lasting on- or several days in co-operation with the WWF education centre Seewinkelhof;
<b><i>Thayatal NP</i></b>	Single days, weekend courses; training to become a hiking guide is included; excursions



### 8.11. Content of current training

<b>Donauauen NP</b> <b><math>\Sigma</math> 26 d / 205 h</b> <b>One year</b>	Study of National Park: 3 d / 22,5 h Regional history: 0,5 d / 4 h Nature & ecology: 4 d / 32 h Excursion didactic & pedagogic: 4 d / 33 h Special topics & others: 14 d / 113 h
<b>Gesaeuse NP</b> <b><math>\Sigma</math> 48 d / 380 h</b> <b>One year</b>	Study of National Park: 1,5 d / 12 h Regional history: 2,5 d / 20 h Nature & ecology: 14 d / 110 h Excursion didactic & pedagogic: 21 d / 168 h Special topics & others: 9 d / 70 h
<b>Hohe Tauern NP</b> <b><math>\Sigma</math> 121 d / 968 h</b> <b>Three years</b>	Study of National Park & basics: 11 d / 88 h Regional history: 5 d / 40 h Nature & ecology: 8,5 d / 68 h Excursion didactic & pedagogic: 4,5 d / 36 h Practical part : 75 d / 600 h
<b>Kalkalpen NP</b> <b><math>\Sigma</math> 19 d / 164 h</b> <b>One year</b>	Basic course: 6 d / 54,5 h Project report: 2,5 d / 20 h Pilot guided tour and reflection: 1 d / 10 h Practical period: 7 d / 62 h deepening course: 2 d / 17 h
<b>Neusiedlersee/Seewinkel NP</b> <b><math>\Sigma</math> 27 d / 216 h</b> <b>One year</b>	Study of National Park: 2 d / 16 h Regional history: 2 d / 16 h Nature & ecology: 18 d / 144 h Excursion didactic & pedagogic: 5 d / 40 h Special topics & others: n.n.
<b>Thayatal NP</b> <b><math>\Sigma</math> 25 d / 200 h</b> <b>Half year</b>	Study of National Park: 3,5 d / 28 h Regional history: 5 d / 40 h Nature & ecology: 8,5 d / 68 h Excursion didactic & pedagogic: 4,5 d / 36 h Special topics & others: 3,5 d / 28 h

## 8.12. *What emphases?*

Details and focus of single training courses can be found in the appendix.

## 8.13. *Charge for members a) basic training, b) further training*

<b><i>Donauauen NP</i></b>	Basic education: € 600, - (€ 120, - pro module) free further training, cost sharing in exclusive courses;
<b><i>Gesaeuse NP</i></b>	Basic education: € 500, - free further training, cost sharing in exclusive courses;
<b><i>Hohe Tauern NP</i></b>	Basic education: € 216,- further training courses: € 70,- -€ 120,-/course block; cost are beared for employees;
<b><i>Kalkalpen NP</i></b>	Basic education: ~ € 500,- free one- to two days further training courses, cost sharing in case of seminars lasting several days;
<b><i>Neusiedlersee/Seewinkel NP</i></b>	Basic education: € 600,-
<b><i>Thayatal NP</i></b>	Basic education: € 200 – 250,- free further training;

### 8.14. Financial calculation and support

<b>Donauauen NP</b>	Fixed budget for a year for basic-and further training;
<b>Gesaeuse NP</b>	Calculated budget for a year for basic-and further training; no funding;
<b>Hohe Tauern NP</b>	Fixed budget for a year; no additional funding;
<b>Kalkalpen NP</b>	Fixed budget for basic- and further training, no additional funding;
<b>Neusiedlersee/Seewinkel NP</b>	No fixed budget; special purpose capital; no funding;
<b>Thayatal NP</b>	No fixed budget, but cost framework; no funding utilized;

### 8.15. Dropout-rate a) during the courses, b) within 1-2 years

<b>Donauauen NP</b>	a) < 5 persons b) ~ 50 – 80 %
<b>Gesaeuse NP</b>	a) < 5 persons b) ~ 30 %
<b>Hohe Tauern NP</b>	High dropout-rate in extern persons;
<b>Kalkalpen NP</b>	a) not relevant b) ~ 50 %
<b>Neusiedlersee/Seewinkel NP</b>	a) < 5 persons b) ~ 80 %
<b>Thayatal NP</b>	Not relevant;

### 8.16. Exam modalities

<b><i>Donauauen NP</i></b>	Written test, practical excursion;
<b><i>Gesaeuse NP</i></b>	Intermediate testing; written exam, test-excursion; grade point-system;
<b><i>Hohe Tauern NP</i></b>	Written exam;
<b><i>Kalkalpen NP</i></b>	Verbal exam, project report, practical period (pilot guided tour);
<b><i>Neusiedlersee/Seewinkel NP</i></b>	no exam;
<b><i>Thayatal NP</i></b>	Verbal exam with partly extern examiner, tested guided tour, point system for assessment

### 8.17. Official term

<b><i>Donauauen NP</i></b>	National Park Ranger
<b><i>Gesaeuse NP</i></b>	National Park Ranger
<b><i>Hohe Tauern NP</i></b>	National Park-Betreuer (National Park Ranger)
<b><i>Kalkalpen NP</i></b>	National Park Betreuer
<b><i>Neusiedlersee/Seewinkel NP</i></b>	National Park-Besucherbetreuer
<b><i>Thayatal NP</i></b>	National Park-Betreuer

### 8.18. Kinds of employment contract (type, number)?

<b><i>Donauauen NP</i></b>	Freelancer, self-employed;
<b><i>Gesaeuse NP</i></b>	Saesonal employees; contract for service
<b><i>Hohe Tauern NP</i></b>	year-round employees, seasonal and marginal employees, working on fee basis
<b><i>Kalkalpen NP</i></b>	„Rahmenauftrag“, freelancers; 2 – 3 seasonal employed guardians (half-day)
<b><i>Neusiedlersee/Seewinkel NP</i></b>	Marginal employees, self-employed;
<b><i>Thayatal NP</i></b>	Employees (saesonal, monthly); marginal employees;

### 8.19. Main audience/target group

<b><i>Donauauen NP</i></b>	School groups, bus groups, families
<b><i>Gesaeuse NP</i></b>	School groups, families, local visitors
<b><i>Hohe Tauern NP</i></b>	School groups, tourists, visitor of exhibitions;
<b><i>Kalkalpen NP</i></b>	School groups, families, observers of wildlife, guided cave tours;
<b><i>Neusiedlersee/Seewinkel NP</i></b>	No special target groups;
<b><i>Thayatal NP</i></b>	School groups, tourist groups, retiree

**8.20. What fees are paid (daily/hourly rate)**

<b><i>Donauauen NP</i></b>	Half day: € 70, - day: € 140, - day with evening program (Meierhof): € 145,-; diverse extra charge; hourly rate: € 11,-; special fees
<b><i>Gesaeuse NP</i></b>	Half day: € 90, - day: € 140, - day with evening program: € 210,- diverse extra charge; hourly rate: € 12,-; special fees
<b><i>Hohe Tauern NP</i></b>	Employees:~ € 1.100 – 1.200,- net ; guardians on fee basis: half day: € 60,- day: € 120,- hourly rate: € 10,- diverse extra charge;
<b><i>Kalkalpen NP</i></b>	Half day: € 109,- day: € 146,- special charge for short programs;
<b><i>Neusiedlersee/Seewinkel NP</i></b>	Half day: € 72,- project weeks are carried out extern by WWF-Seewinkelhof;
<b><i>Thayatal NP</i></b>	Half day: € 75,- day: € 117,- day with evening program: € 138,- (pre-tax, plus sixth part of the year); special fees

## 8.21. Visitor structure, statistic process 2007

all National Parks		HT Kärnten	HT Salzburg	HT Tirol	Gesaeuse	Kalkalpen	Thayatal	Donau-Auen	Neusiedlersee
	gesamt								
<i>PUPILS IN NP</i>									
Total pupils	73.904	5.611	19.123	5.615	8.380	6.729	3.537	21.099	3.810
Pupils 6-10 years	27.961	2.702	6.299	1.395	2.380	2.316	1.701	10.437	731
Pupils 10-18 years	45.870	2.909	12.824	4.220	6.000	4.413	1.763	10.662	3.079
Total classes	3.126	218	796	261	332	302	167	930	120
Classes Primary school	1.426	113	521	63	100	110	85	414	20
Classes Secondary school	1.515	101	244	158	206	177	82	454	93
Other classes	185	4	31	40	26	15	0	62	7
1/2-or 1-day stopovers of classes	1.784	95	348	130	95	224	145	715	32
Stopover of classes lasting several days	934	123	448	131	34	66	22	80	30
Total number of guides with schools	4.034	479	407	813	250	328	197	1.113	447
<i>NP MEETS SCHOOL</i>									
Presentations/lessons in schools	103	0	k.A.	55	18	12	17	1	0
Number of schools/classes	78	0	k.A.	42	18	k.A.	17	1	0
Number of pupils	925	0	k.A.	k.A.	326	289	310	k.A.	0

<i>EXCURSIONS /HIKING TOURS etc.</i>		HT Kärnten	HT Salzburg	HT Tirol	Gesaeuse	Kalkalpen	Thayatal	Donau-Auen	Neusiedlersee
guided exsursions / hiking tours	1.885	230	283	265	149	176	82	535	165
Participants	31.966	2.076	3.595	3.937	1.839	4.143	2.444	10.921	3.011
Foreign groups	434	100	21	178	15	13	13	67	27
Holiday camps/games	167	1	0	139	6	0	1	19	1
Participants in camps	1.730	16	0	1.281	86	0	25	307	15
<i>INFO-CENTERS / EXHIBITIONS</i>									
Visitors of info-centres/points	366.200	95.755	50.063	17.565	14.400	68.900	7.525	76.980	35.012
Visitors of exhibitions etc.	127.940	18.493	50.063	1.128	4.072	29.150	4.697	20.337	0
Guided tours through exhibitions	2.457	764	206	124	19	161	95	1.088	0
<i>EVENTS</i>									
Presentations, slide-shows, info evening meetings	442	46	56	125	66	44	26	17	62
Participants	16.078	1.583	864	5.145	4.323	2.044	500	293	1.326
Own events of NPs	403	30	8	15	241	37	11	33	16
Participants	42.757	2.877	6.666	5.800	6.779	14.629	1.478	3.743	375
Events, where the NP participates	163	11	18	11	35	20	11	44	13
<i>STAFF</i>									
Year-round employed Besucherbetreuer/Ranger etc.	20	6	4	7	0	0	0	3	0
Saesonal employed Besucherbetreuer/Ranger etc.	36	5	14	3	3	2	1	8	0
Guardian on fee basis / freelancers	194	12	15	2	32	31	0	72	30
Pool of educated NP-guardians	209	8	14	0	38	40	25	44	40
Volonteers, internships, non-skilled workers	73	13	21	8	2	18	6	5	0

Table 1      Statistic of visitor structure in Austrians National Parks 2007; Source: BMLFWU 2008



**8.22. How to classificate the visitor's satisfaction**

<b><i>Donauauen NP</i></b>	Evaluation by questionnaires for visitors
<b><i>Gesaeuse NP</i></b>	Evaluation by questionnaires and visitor poll; special interviews with teachers;
<b><i>Hohe Tauern NP</i></b>	Visitor interviews;
<b><i>Kalkalpen NP</i></b>	Visitor interviews, questionnaires;
<b><i>Neusiedlersee/Seewinkel NP</i></b>	n.n.
<b><i>Thayatal NP</i></b>	n.n.

## **9. Previous efforts for the development of an National Park Ranger Award Scheme**

### **9.1. *Efforts in Austria***

Since many years a more or less intensive discussion about the establishment of the job description „National Park Ranger“ and a uniform regulation of the particular education has been kept in Austria. Naturally, the wish for a solution is bigger on the part of concerned persons than efforts on the part of responsible decision-makers let recognise. Nevertheless, there were attempts for the arrangement of country-wide uniform education guidelines in the past, mainly on the part of the responsible ministry. But those didn't exceed considerable principle arrangements, which were concluded between single National Park administrations.

#### **9.1.1. *Status quo of the education of National Park Ranger in Austria, 1997***

The study about the „Status quo of the education of National Park Ranger in Austria“ from the year 1997 is to be accentuated in the long list of activities, which is consulted as comparative study for the theses in hand (see capture 5.1).

#### **9.1.2. *Meeting “New Jobs in Nature”, 1999***

In the year 1999 the Upper Austrian Academy for environment and nature arranged a three-day symposium to the topic: “Neue Jobs in der Natur – Berufsbild Naturführer / Meeting “New Jobs in Nature””. Thereby it was tried to catch some inputs of different areas like nature conservation, tourism and agriculture. A survey of already existing education institutions and job titles, associated with nature communicating was given as well. There was the corresponding argument that divers training courses concerning the existing function of nature communication should be coordinated. It

already has seemed to be necessary to work out course contents and quality criteria for nature communication services as province comprehensive as possible. At last it was adhered, that a uniform job description would be intensely in the area of conflict between province-specific interests and a European/international definition. Unfortunately, it was neglected to start a uniform education and respectively to establish the job description “National Park Ranger” as result of this congress, while associations of nature- and landscape guides and forest guides displayed clearly more efficiency and apparent success.

### **9.1.3.        *Minimum standards for Rangers, 2000***

On 21. September 2000 minimum standards for the National Park guardian’s education were determined within a directorate meeting of all Austrian National Parks common with the Ministry of Life in Mallnitz. These allow for uniform affiliation criteria, a training and exam through qualified experts, writing of certificates for the successful completion of the training and compulsory further training possibilities as well. The time frame should comprehend at least 40 days of theoretical lessons and 15 days of practice.

Thematic focuses were: nature/biology, idea of National Parks and nature conservation, regional history, didactic and nature pedagogic, outdoor skills and attendance and realisation of excursions and eco-pedagogical projects.

Types of courses were structured in: a) basic training, which should comprehend the whole training and should be compulsory for all new applicants, b) fresh-up training, which should contain those parts of training that were not or insufficiently considered within the basic training; this fresh-up training would be compulsory for all, who have been trained in an other National Park, but need to be adapted to new minimum standards, c) further training as well as d) National Park specific courses, which would be compulsory for those Rangers, who have been trained in an other National Park and want to shift to an other Austrian Park.

During the years 2000 and 2001 numerous efforts were undertaken on the part of the Ministry of Life by Mag. Viktoria Hasler to convert possibilities of a certified guardian’s

training by established institutions like LFI (Ländliches Fortbildungsinstitut). Unfortunately these efforts remained without success, partly due to disagreement about particular competencies and implementation but also due to different ideas of single National Park administrations (written documents 2008).

#### **9.1.4.            *Minimum standards for Rangers, 2005***

Those minimum standards, which were decided in the year 2000, were further reduced in 2005, based on a consensus between the National Park administration and the Ministry of Life. The number of course days was determined to 30 days theory and 10 days practice as minimum, the training duration should not exceed two years – remarkable in this context is that at present this temporal guideline is not carried out in four National Park. A high individual responsibility in structuring the training was granted to particular administrations and communicating contents were determined in note form on just one A4-page. The so far achieved consensus is more than moderate measured by situations in other established European sanctuaries and improvements in countries that formerly have been dealing as latecomers! For this purpose see also the newly established 3-year bachelor study program for Rangers of the University of Zilina/Slovakia ([www.vuvb.utc.sk](http://www.vuvb.utc.sk))!

## **9.2.      *European efforts***

### **9.2.1.      *European Ranger Project, 2000***

“In June 1997 in Switzerland, a Think Tank on ‘Youth, Nature, Culture and the Environment’ was hosted by the Jacobs Foundation. The meeting focused on methods of involving youth in the environment as a means to encourage more active and productive lifestyles. In particular the meeting discussed the potential for development of the professional Ranger as a role model, and as a vehicle to achieve greater youth involvement in the environment.

The key recommendations arising from this Think Tank were discussed further by a working group of representatives from key organisations, plus representatives of ranger services across Europe (Losehill Hall, July 1997). This meeting produced more detailed recommendations:

- ✓ That a European ‘Youth Ranger Scheme’ should be investigated and established.
- ✓ That the International Ranger Federation (IRF) should co-ordinate the compilation of a database, with the co-operation of EUROPARC and IUCN (World Conservation Union).
- ✓ That an IRF Review Panel (containing both academics and practitioners) should be established to review and accredit ranger qualifications.

As a result of this meeting, a proposal was put to the Jacobs Foundation by Losehill Hall to fund a two year project “Promoting environment literacy through integrated youth and ranger training programmes” to address some of these recommendations.” (<http://englishranger.co.uk/downloads.aspx> 2008)

For further reading about the project achievements please see:

<http://englishranger.co.uk/Documents/Final%20report%20no%20photos.doc>

### **9.2.2. TOPAS – Training of Protected Area Staff, 2004**

TOPAS stands for "Training of Protected Area Staff" – a training program for staff in European protected areas, which was worked out according to Europe-wide uniform criteria.

#### **Background**

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) emphasized in the action program „Parks for Life“, that well educated staff is essential for the administration and development of protected areas. Their training should be given high priority. There, it depends not only on professional abilities, but also on administrative and communicative abilities. The TOPAS-project is responsive to demands from European Nature conservation organisation like EUROPARC, the International Ranger Foundation (IRF) and the IUCN to initiate a great structured initiative for the unification of the basic- and further training for staff of protected areas.

#### **Aims**

The TOPAS-project has brought into being from administrators of protected areas, ambassadors of European nature conservation organisations and educational institutions as well as experts at the end of 1999 in the international house Sonnenberg in the National Park Harz. It is aimed at the development of standards for the continuous education of staff in European protected areas. Educational institutions developed in cooperation with protected areas staff from entire Europe training courses for a Europe-wide uniform education plan and so they contributed to a high standard of the new professional qualifications.

The designed educational materials became accessible on the TOPAS-WebSite, to allow members from the complete European Union and the acceding countries a correspondence course. In the course of the project lessons to different topics were developed by one project partner (Developing Partner, DP) at a time. After a control in terms of content of the course from a professional technical board (Technical Board, TB) each course was tested from another project partner (Testing Partner,

TP). This required the translation of the courses into the national language of the TP and the adaptation of the courses to local conditions in the country of the TP. The testing of the courses was evaluated in cooperation with the DP, to optimise the course as far as possible. Finally all courses were certified to ensure a Europe-wide unification of the education program and became accessible on internet.

In the framework of the TOPAS-project courses to following topics were developed:

- ✓ Work with jung people, volunteers and handicapped people
- ✓ Ethic (visitor assistance, hospitality)
- ✓ European institutions
- ✓ Ability for teamwork (standard groups, social acceptance, community, professional federations, representation)
- ✓ Knowledge of foreign languages
- ✓ Basic ecology, biodiversity, from islands to networks, coherent ecological networks, habitat classification
- ✓ Basic Ranger training
- ✓ Information systems (data, monitoring, map creation, documentation)
- ✓ Habitat renaturation and –care (particularly moorland)
- ✓ Map reading, orientation in the area, visitor safety, crises- and catastrophe management, risk analysis
- ✓ Sustainable forest utilization
- ✓ Sustainable tourism, visitor management
- ✓ Sustainable management in mountain regions
- ✓ Planning of the management of protected areas
- ✓ Rhetoric, conflict resolution, guiding, communication with residents and different standard groups, presentation methods
- ✓ Strategic planning, "human resource management", project management, marketing, fundraising, financial planning
- ✓ Environmental education
- ✓ "Wildlife management / control", resettlement

([http://www.nna.niedersachsen.de/master/C7083451\\_N5920650\\_L20\\_D0\\_I5661252.html](http://www.nna.niedersachsen.de/master/C7083451_N5920650_L20_D0_I5661252.html) 2008)



## 10. Discussion

Within the last ten years the image of a typical National Park Ranger has changed a lot. On the one hand it became older, more feminine, more academic and more international. But at the same time the missing regional relatedness becomes more obvious and the job as Ranger tends slowly but steadily to become an attractive, but only short- or middle term conducted side job. Compared to this stands the majority's wish for an established job description with an adequate job market, in which they would see a long-term perspective.

### 10.1. „Ranger Jo“

Following a definitely famous person of the international „Protected Areas – Scene“ it is essential to introduce, „Ranger Jo“ as statistically correct Austrian National Park Ranger of the year 2008.

„Ranger Jo“ is about 40 years old, male but with increasingly feminine characteristics. He lives in a fix long-term relationship and at least he can be happy about two children. His origin is still in the dark, but at least he is resident in the National Park region at present. Just five years ago he got in contact with the function in the particular National Park and gets to be called employee during few days per years when he is on his way as Ranger. To work on weekend is a natural course of action, even if this is hardly compatible with his job. It's a long time since his academic education and he has to be characterized as “career changer”, who can neither show practice nor active engagement in nature conservation. Nevertheless, he is concentrating with heart and zeal, completes further training and additional qualifications und could imagine to work in other sanctuaries temporarily. His strengths are social competency, the ability to explain facts fascinating and meanwhile also his considerable knowledge about natural characteristics in his National Park. He is satisfied with the term “Ranger” and would be happy to fulfil this job as “Full-time job”, if this job description established at last...

## **10.2. Results of questionnaires**

The increase of the age-average is striking: the assumption is suggested, that many persons who backed the project “National Park” with great engagement and idealism in the early stage, still rate among the “hard core-team”. At the same time younger dedicated staff, who (may) detect(s) a long-term perspective in this function, is missing.

Delightful is the increase in female staff to nearly the half of all active National Park Rangers.

A significant increase is to list relating to persons without an origin in the National Park region – at the same time the average trip length is getting longer and the job “Ranger” is getting more and more a classical “commuter job”.

Despite all high requirements for this function only few persons are able to derive their –financial- living from this job. Hence, the necessary qualifications are very demanding for a typical side job. The effort bears no relation to the average duration of employment of few days per year, both on the part of National Park administrations, which separately design expensive and comprehensive courses, and on the part of concerned Rangers.

The engagement of Austrian National Park Ranger is absolutely remarkable. The high willingness to attend further training courses and the high extent of already completed training give rise to optimism. Despite numerous open problems and unsatisfying working situations the identification with “their” sanctuary and the National Park idea is extremely high.

Functions and tasks, which make up the professional everyday life of National Park Rangers, are broad and diverse and do not limit to visitor support. This circumstance must be considered concerning a uniform education as well as a common job description.

## **10.3. Conclusion and perspective**

The establishment of a **common job description and uniform training standards** while keeping the diversity and individuality of National Parks is not just a desire, but also an entitled demand of all concerned parties. Not least, seen from the economical

point of view National Park administrations should be constrained to secure long-term perspectives for those collaborators, which, before anything else, transport the idea of National Parks and communicate this to visitors. Therefore it should not stand in owe to bridge National Park borders for co-operation as well as to reconsider “Best Practice” examples from other international sanctuaries and to adopt them adequately adapted. The clarified detailed questions for this purpose are certainly not to underestimate, but they seem to be possible to get managed with an according will for solutions and negotiations. It is necessary that new models for a job description “Österreichischer Nationalpark Ranger” are consensus-able, acting persons have to be ready to compromise, in order that finally a solutions will come, that is conducive to the great image and concerns of National Parks.

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## **11.2. Internet Resources**

TOPAS:

[http://www.nna.niedersachsen.de/master/C7083451\\_N5920650\\_L20\\_D0\\_I5661252.html](http://www.nna.niedersachsen.de/master/C7083451_N5920650_L20_D0_I5661252.html)

European Ranger Project:

<http://englishranger.co.uk/downloads.aspx>

<http://englishranger.co.uk/Documents/Final%20report%20no%20photos.doc>

Slowakia Ranger Study Program:

[www.vuvb.utc.sk](http://www.vuvb.utc.sk)

Nationalparks Austria:

[www.nationalparks.or.at](http://www.nationalparks.or.at)

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## **13. Appendix**

### **✓ Questionnaire**

#### **Concepts of basic and further education programs:**

- ✓ Donauauen National Park**
- ✓ Gesaeuse National Park**
- ✓ Hohe Tauern National Park**
- ✓ Kalkalpen National Park**
- ✓ Neusiedlersee/Seewinkel National Park**
- ✓ Thayatal National Park**

### **✓ INTERNATIONAL RANGER FEDERATION - CODE OF ETHICS**

## A General Questions

A.1 Age:

A.2 Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female

A.3 Family Status: ☐ Single

☐ Married, long-term partnership

Number of children

A.4 City: postal code

A.5 Do you come from the National Park region? ☐ Yes ☐ No

A.6 Is your current residence in the National Park region? ☐ Yes ☐ No

A.7 How far away is your residence from the National Park? ~ Kilometers

A.7a Have you been to the National Park in the last two years?

☐ Yes ☐ No

A.8 In which National Park are you occupied? (multiple answers)

☐ Donauauen if yes, where: ☐ Viennese Part ☐ Lower Austrian Part

☐ Neusiedlersee/Seewinkel

☐ Thayatal

☐ Gesäuse

☐ Oberösterreichische Kalkalpen

☐ Hohe Tauern – Tirol ☐ Hohe Tauern – Salzburg ☐ Hohe Tauern – Kärnten

A.9 Do other family members work in the National Park, too? ☐ Yes ☐ No

A.10 How long have you been working in National Parks? Since years

A.11 To which department is your activity assigned to?

☐ National Park Administration

☐ Forest management if yes, which department (ÖBF, MA 49, etc.) :

☐ Natural History Museum Vienna

☐ Others if yes, which department:

**A.12 How is your employment contract in the National Park arranged?**

- ☐ Employee
 ☐ Labourer
 ☐ Clerk  
☐ Full time
 ☐ Half day
 ☐ By the day/hour  
 Time period ☐ year-round ☐ seasonal, from (month) to

or:

- ☐ Contract of service
 ☐ Freelancer
 ☐ Self-employed  
☐ Trainee
 ☐ Others if yes, what:

Time period ☐ year-round ☐ seasonal, from (month) to

How many – estimated – working days do you have per year? ~ Days\*

\*) please take 2007 as benchmark!

**A.13 Do you also work on weekends in the National Park? ☐ Yes ☐ No**

**A.14 For what tasks are you deployed in the National Park? (multiple answers)**

- ☐ Besucherbetreuer/in, National Park Ranger, etc.  
☐ Naturschutzorgan, Nationalparkorgan, Gebietsaufsicht, etc.  
☐ Administration, Organisation, etc.  
☐ Others e.g.:
 ☐ Workmanship  
☐ Hunting tasks  
☐ Forestry tasks  
☐ Scientific tasks (e. g. monitoring, etc.)  
☐ other, in particular:

**A.14a How do you estimate the percentage allocation of your working time, referred to the National Park?**

% as Besucherbetreuer/in, National Park Ranger, etc.

% as Naturschutzorgan, Nationalparkorgan, Gebietsaufsicht, etc

% Administration, Organisation, etc.

others e.g.:

% Workmanship

% Hunting tasks

% Forestry tasks

% scientific tasks (e.g. monitoring, etc.)

% others, in particular:

**A.15 What is the official term for your function?**

- ☐ Nationalparkwart/in
- ☐ Besucherbetreuer/in
- ☐ National Park Ranger
- ☐ Nationalparkorgan
- ☐ Nationalparkführer/in
- ☐ Other, in particular:

**A.19 Do you hold an other job besides your engagement in the National Park at the moment?**

- ☐ Yes      ☐ No

If yes, what?

- ☐ Agriculture and forestry
- ☐ Mountain- and Skiguide
- ☐ Scientific job
- ☐ Social-pädagogic job, or similar
- ☐ Other, in particular:

Time period    ☐ year-round    ☐ seasonal, from (month)      to

Do you think, that this job is a complement according to your job in the National Park?

- ☐ Yes      ☐ No

**A.20 Please, mark your highest completed education!**

- ☐ Primary School
- ☐ Secondary School (incl. polytechnic course)
- ☐ Apprenticeship    if yes, which?
- ☐ Vocational middle school (which?)
- ☐ Vocational High School (which?)
- ☐ Grammar School
- ☐ College (discipline of study)?
- ☐ University (discipline of study)?
- ☐ Others    if yes, what (e.g. MSc, etc.)

A.21 Are you, besides your function in the National Park, in one form or another in a professional training (e.g. apprenticeship, study, etc.)?

☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, which?

A.22 Did you carry on an other profession prior to your engagement in the National Park?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, which?

- ☐ Agriculture and forestry
- ☐ Mountain- and Ski guide
- ☐ Scientific job
- ☐ Social-pädagogic job, or similar
- ☐ Other, in particular:

Do you think that this job is a complement according to your job in the National Park?

☐ Yes ☐ No

## B Visitor support

B.24 Which activities do your visitor support comprise? *Multiple answers, please mark your three main activities additionally with „H“!*

- ☐ H ☐ Lectures, slide-shows, multi-visions, etc.
- ☐ H ☐ Seminars, workshops about a specific topic
- ☐ H ☐ Guided tours through exhibitions
- ☐ H ☐ Guided tours through theme- and experience trails
- ☐ H ☐ Walks in the area
- ☐ H ☐ Special animal observations
- ☐ H ☐ Special plant observations
- ☐ H ☐ Boat trips
- ☐ H ☐ Biking tours
- ☐ H ☐ Mountain tours
- ☐ H ☐ Climbing tours (also whiff of climbing, Experience rock, etc.)
- ☐ H ☐ Night walks
- ☐ H ☐ Others, in particular:

**B.25** What is your personal target group? *Multiple answers, please mark your three main activities additionally with „H“!*

- ☐ H ☐ Preschooler and Kindergartengroups
- ☐ H ☐ Primary Scholar
- ☐ H ☐ Secondary Scholar
- ☐ H ☐ Students from vocational middle or high schools
- ☐ H ☐ Students
- ☐ H ☐ Families
- ☐ H ☐ Seniors
- ☐ H ☐ Teachers
- ☐ H ☐ Locals
- ☐ H ☐ Tourists (☐ domestic tourists ☐ foreign tourists)
- ☐ H ☐ Groups with special interest
- ☐ H ☐ Groups with special needs or handicapped people
- ☐ H ☐ Others, in particular:

**B.26** Which are the main topics you represent within your guiding activity? *Multiple answers, please mark your three main activities additionally with „H“!*

- ☐ H ☐ Specific features of the landscape in the National Park-region
- ☐ H ☐ Regional specialities in fauna
- ☐ H ☐ Regional specialities in flora
- ☐ H ☐ General ecological questions
- ☐ H ☐ Nature- and environmental problems in the National Park
- ☐ H ☐ Superregional and/or global nature- and environmental problems
- ☐ H ☐ Culture history of the National Park-region
- ☐ H ☐ History of the National Parks
- ☐ H ☐ Organisation and/or activities of the National Parks
- ☐ H ☐ Didactic tips for teachers and other multiplier
- ☐ H ☐ mainly sportive nature
- ☐ H ☐ Others, in particular:
- ☐ H ☐ Others, in particular:

**B.28** Which didactical methods do you use outdoor? *Multiple answer,s please mark your three main activities additionally with „H“!*

- ☐ H ☐ Short, location-related information
- ☐ H ☐ Long lectures
- ☐ H ☐ Discussions
- ☐ H ☐ Feed back – rounds
- ☐ H ☐ Nature observations
- ☐ H ☐ Landscape observations
- ☐ H ☐ Animation to discovery/observation by oneself
- ☐ H ☐ Role plays
- ☐ H ☐ Quiz
- ☐ H ☐ Musical plays
- ☐ H ☐ Games, Handcrafts with nature materials
- ☐ H ☐ Cognition plays
- ☐ H ☐ Drawing in Nature
- ☐ H ☐ Taking pictures in Nature
- ☐ H ☐ Others, in particular:
- ☐ H ☐ Others, in particular:
- ☐ H ☐ Others, in particular:

**B.29** Do you use special materials, e.g. lenses, cards, preparations of animals, etc.?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, which?

If yes, are these private materials and/or provided by the administration?

- ☐ Privat ☐ Provided by the administration ☐ As well as

**B.30** Which utensils, equipment, service clothing etc. do you carry with you during your service?

Do you think your equipment is adequate?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

If no, which additional equipment would you wish for?



**B.31** What are the central issues you are faced with in the visitor support? *Multiple answers, please mark your three main activities additionally with „H“!*

- ☐ H ☐ Too big groups
- ☐ H ☐ Too little possibilities for preparation for the guided tour
- ☐ H ☐ Insufficient equipment with appropriate materials, manuals
- ☐ H ☐ Too little prepared scholars and/or guests
- ☐ H ☐ Detailed questions, which can not be answered
- ☐ H ☐ Uninterested or negatively conspicuous visitors
- ☐ H ☐ Be in time during the guided tours
- ☐ H ☐ Security matters at guided tours/excursions

If yes, which?

- ☐ H ☐ Alternatives at bad weather conditions
- ☐ H ☐ Too little further training-possibilities
- ☐ H ☐ Little acceptance at locals
- ☐ H ☐ Others, in particular:
- ☐ H ☐ Others, in particular:
- ☐ H ☐ Others, in particular:

## **C Nature conservation**

**C.32** Have you already worked in nature conservation prior to your arrangement in the National Park?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, where?

**C.33** Do you work in nature conservation at the moment, besides in the National Park?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, where?

## D Basic and further training

D.39 Which type of basic training do you prefer?

- ☐ One-day on weekdays
- ☐ Lasting several days on weekdays
- ☐ One-to two day weekend courses
- ☐ Evening courses on weekdays
- ☐ Lasting several days (minimum 5 days)
- ☐ Continuous course (2-3 months)

D.39a Which type of further training do you prefer?

- ☐ One-day on weekdays
- ☐ Lasting several days on weekdays
- ☐ One-to two day weekend courses
- ☐ Evening courses on weekdays
- ☐ Lasting several days (minimum 5 days)

D.41 Who should be responsible for basic and further training in your opinion?

- ☐ Exclusively the National Park administration
- ☐ A superior National Park training centre (respectively educational institution)
- ☐ A common National Park training centre for similar/common training contents, linked to a regional training by the particular National Parks
- ☐ Educational institutions from the rural area (e.g. LFI, etc.)
- ☐ Others If yes, what?

D.41a Did you attend a basic training course of a National Park administration?

- ☐ Yes      ☐ No

If yes, how was it structured? (multiple answers)

- ☐ One-day on weekdays
- ☐ Lasting several days on weekdays
- ☐ One-to two day weekend courses
- ☐ Evening courses on weekdays

☐ Lasting several days (minimum 5 days)

☐ Continuous course (2-3 months)

How satisfied were you with the structure/organisation of these courses?

Basic training: ☐ satisfied

☐ not satisfied, because:

D.41b Did you attend further training course in a National Park administration?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, how was it structured? (multiple answers)

☐ One-day on weekdays

☐ Lasting several days on weekdays

☐ One-to two day weekend courses

☐ Evening courses on weekdays

☐ Lasting several days (minimum 5 days)

How many days per year do you attend training courses?

Days

How satisfied were you with the structure/organisation of these courses?

Further training: ☐ satisfied

☐ not satisfied, because:

D.41b Did you complete optional qualifications within your basic and further trainings?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, which?

☐ First aid

Note:

☐ Hunting licence

Note:

☐ Mountain-, hiking guide

Note:

☐ Ski teacher

Note:

☐ Climbing course

Note:

☐ Boat guide

Note:

☐ Cave guide

Note:

☐ Mountain bike guide

Note:

☐ Avalanche awareness

Note:

☐ Others, in particular:

☐ Others, in particular:

☐ Others, in particular:

D.42 How do you classify your willingness to further trainings?

☐ Very high      ☐ High      ☐ Low      ☐ Not at all

D.42a On what topics would you like to be trained?

- ☐ Nature science
- ☐ Cultural history
- ☐ Environmental issues
- ☐ New information technologies
- ☐ Public relations
- ☐ Foreign languages
- ☐ Special methods for kids
- ☐ Special methods for adults
- ☐ Psychology
- ☐ Group dynamic
- ☐ General environmental education
- ☐ Game-pädagogic
- ☐ Nature experience
- ☐ Rhetoric
- ☐ Excursion-didactic
- ☐ Adventure-pädagogic
- ☐ Special pädagogic for people with special needs
- ☐ Others, in particular:
- ☐ Others, in particular:
- ☐ Others, in particular:

D.43 What do you think about an Austrian-wide common basic training for National Park members (Besucherbetreuer, Nationalpark Ranger, or similar)?

- ☐ Very good, because:
- ☐ Good, because:
- ☐ Less good, because:
- ☐ Bad, because:

D.44 Would you like to get the opportunity to work in other National Parks for some time?

☐ Yes ☐ No

D.47 How do you classify the acceptance of your work in the National Park within the locals?

☐ Very high ☐ High ☐ Low ☐ Very low

D.48 How do you classify your own satisfaction with your activity?

☐ Very high ☐ High ☐ Low ☐ Very low

D.49 What personal experiences are important for a National Park Ranger (or similar)?

*Multiple answers, please mark your three main activities additionally with „H“!*

- ☐ H ☐ Sociableness
- ☐ H ☐ Self assurance
- ☐ H ☐ Empathy
- ☐ H ☐ Knowledge of foreign languages
- ☐ H ☐ Good ability to explain
- ☐ H ☐ Comprehensive knowledge of nature science
- ☐ H ☐ Operational readiness und engagement
- ☐ H ☐ High physical capacity (sportive)
- ☐ H ☐ Persuasiveness
- ☐ H ☐ Pedagogic talent
- ☐ H ☐ Motivation
- ☐ H ☐ Team spirit
- ☐ H ☐ Humour
- ☐ H ☐ Self-confidence
- ☐ H ☐ Orientation ability in the area
- ☐ H ☐ Good knowledge about the area
- ☐ H ☐ Others, in particular:
- ☐ H ☐ Others, in particular:
- ☐ H ☐ Others, in particular:

D.50 Do you wear an uniform service clothing in your National Park?

☐ Yes ☐ No

**D.51** Would you like an uniform service clothing in particular National Park?

☐ Yes ☐ No

**D.51a** Would you like an Austrian-wide uniform service clothing in the National Parks?

☐ Yes ☐ No

**D.52** How would you like to name your job?

- ☐ Nationalparkwart  
☐ Nationalpark Ranger  
☐ Besucherbetreuer  
☐ Other, in particular:

**D.56** How good are you informed about the existing job description of National Park Ranger in other National Parks (e.g. Swiss National Park, Triglav National Park, National Park Bavarian forest etc.)?

☐ Very good ☐ Adequate ☐ Little ☐ Not at all

**D.57** Is it important for you, that the function as National Park Ranger, “Besucherbetreuer”, etc. is defined in an Austrian-wide uniform job description with a clear specification of your tasks and obligatory training standards?

☐ Yes, because  
☐ No, because

**D.58** Could you imagine to carry out the function as National Park Ranger, “Besucherbetreuer”, etc. as a full-time job (according to examples of other protected areas like in question D.56)?

☐ Yes ☐ Rather yes ☐ Rather no ☐ No  
☐ Yes, I’m already working in this area

If yes or rather yes: Would you be willing to gain some additional qualifications, exceeding the basic training (e.g. mechanic training, hunting license, etc.)?

☐ Yes ☐ Rather yes ☐ Rather no ☐ No

**D.59** What kind of employment contract would you prefer/wish, according to your current private and professional situation?

☐ Contract of service ☐ Freelancer ☐ Self-employed  
☐ Employee, namely: ☐ year-round ☐ seasonal

## **E Miscellaneous**

**E.53 Do you collaborate with volunteers and/or trainees?**

☐ Yes ☐ No

**If yes, how is it working?**

☐ Very good ☐ Good ☐ Less good ☐ Bad, because:

**E.54 Do you collaborate with locals?**

☐ Yes ☐ No

**If yes, how is it working?**

☐ Very good ☐ Good ☐ Less good ☐ Bad, because:

**E.55 Within the „International Ranger unity“– International Ranger Federation (IRF) insists an exchange of different topics, common activities and meeting, etc..? Would you be interested in these opportunities?**

☐ Yes ☐ No

**E.55a Could you imagine to become a member of an Austrian-wide Ranger federation, which contents and aims are the exchange between staff of the several National Parks, road shows, common activities, and much else?**

☐ Yes ☐ No, because:

**E.60 Potential comments and suggestions:**

**Thank you very much for your help!**

## Donauauen National Park

## Lehrgang 2004

	Stunden
<b>Modul 1 - Nationalparkkunde</b>	
Nationalpark-Struktur	8
Kundenorientierung, NP-Geschichte	6,5
NP-Praxis, Nationalparks Austria	8
<b>Modul 2 - Natur- und Kulturräum NP Donau-Auen</b>	
Grundlagen der Ökologie	4
Biologie - Blütenpflanzen	4
Biologie - Säugetiere	4
Biologie - Amphibien, Reptilien	4
Biologie - Vogelkunde	4
Biologie - Mollusken und Fische	4
Geologie und Landschaftsgeschichte	4
Kleintierfauna und Mikrokosmos	4
Bäume und Stäucher der Donau-Auen	4
<b>Modul 3 - Exkursionsdidaktik</b>	
Methodik und Didaktik der Mikroskopie	5
Präsentation, Rhetorik und Theatralik	4
Kulturgeschichte der Region	8
Spiel- und Erlebnispädagogik	8
Exkursionsdidaktik, Naturvermittlung	4
Führungstechnik, Outdoorverhalten	4
<b>Modul 4 - Bootstouren und Projektwochen</b>	
Schlauchbootführerkurs	24
Erste-Hilfe Kurs	16
Rettungsschwimmer-Helferschein	16
Trainingseinheit "Kombitour"	4
Einführung Projektwochen	8
<b>Modul 5 - Spezialthemen</b>	
Mikroskopierkunde	8
Spannungsfeld "Flusslandschaft"	8
biologisch-technische Ranger Skills	8
Schlauchboottour NPI	8
Insekten und Gliederfüßer	8
schriftliche Prüfung	4
Exkursionsprüfung	1
<b>Gesamt</b>	<b>204,5</b>



## Gesäuse National Park

### Lehrgang für Nationalpark-Führer der Nationalpark Gesäuse GmbH 2003/2004 Übersicht der Ausbildungsveranstaltungen

Veranstaltung	Datum	Themen und Inhalte	Referenten	Stunden
Seminar 1	25.09.2003	Begrüßung und Einführungsveranstaltung - Grundlagen des Nationalparks Gesäuse und der Nationalparkgeschichte	Hartmann, Kreiner	5
	26.-27.09.03	Exkursion auf die Heßhütte/Zinödl/Sulzkaralm - Einführung in die Ökologie hochalpiner Lebensräume/Naturvermittlung	Hartmann, Hasitschka, Pausch, Riedl, Rosenberger	20
Seminar 2	03.10.2003	Die Geschichte der Flößerei auf der Enns - Besuch des Flößermuseums Kastenreith bei Weyer	Rosenberger	4
		Fließgewässerökologie am Beispiel der Enns	Hartmann	2
	04.10.2003	Wasserkraftnutzung an der Enns - Besichtigung des Speichers Waag und des Kraftwerks Hieflau	Krenn	4
		Bootsexkursion auf der Enns	Stromüller	5
Seminar 3	11.-12.10.03	Exkursion in den Nationalpark Donau-Auen - Einführung in die Exkursionspraxis	ExkursionsleiterInnen Nationalpark Donau-Auen	20
Seminar 4	18.10.2003	Hydrologie und Gewässerökologie der Enns	Jungwirth	8
Seminar 5	25.-26.10.03	Exkursion auf die Ennstaler Hütte - Naturvermittlungsspiele im alpinen Lebensraum	Moshammer	20

Seminar 6	14.11.2003	Waldmanagement im Nationalpark Gesäuse - aktuelle Fragen, Umwandlungsprojekte, Zukunftsaspekte	Haslinger, Holzinger	5
		Erdgeschichte und Geologie des Gesäuses	Riedl	2
	15.11.2003	Wald- und Forstgeschichte der Gesäuseregion - Besuch des Forstmuseums Silvanum/Großreifling und des Köhlerzentrums in Hieflau	Frank, Hasitschka, Nitterl, Rosenberger	8
Seminar 7	22.11.2003	Begehung der Odelsteinhöhle	Hasitschka, Nachbagauer, Wolf	4
		Lehrgangs-feedback-Runde	—	2
		Zeitzeugen-Gespräch: Zeitgeschichte des Gesäuses in Lebenserinnerungen	Ernest, Kanduth et. al.	4
Seminar 8	06.-07.12.03	Ökologie in Theorie und Praxis - spielerisch vermittelt	Pausch, Rosenberger	18
Seminar 9	22.-23.01.04	Umweltbildung und Erlebnispädagogik - Naturerlebnisspiele	Derbuch, Friess	18
	24.-25.01.04	Umweltbildung und Erlebnispädagogik - Soziale und kommunikative Kompetenz	Römer, Salomon	18
Seminar 10	13.-15.02.04	Ökologie im Winter - Überlebensstrategien von Tieren und Pflanzen	Pausch	24
Seminar 11	28.-29.02.04	"Props" - Basteln von didaktischen Hilfsmitteln für Exkursionen	Hartmann	9
		Spezielle Erste Hilfe für den Exkursionsbetrieb	Kohlhofer-Feichter	9
Seminar 12	05./06.03.04	Schneeschuhwandern und Einführung in die Schneeschuhtechnik	Angerer	8
Seminar 13	12.-13.03.04	Rhetorik, Körpersprache, Exkursionsregie	Hartmann, Rosenberger	15

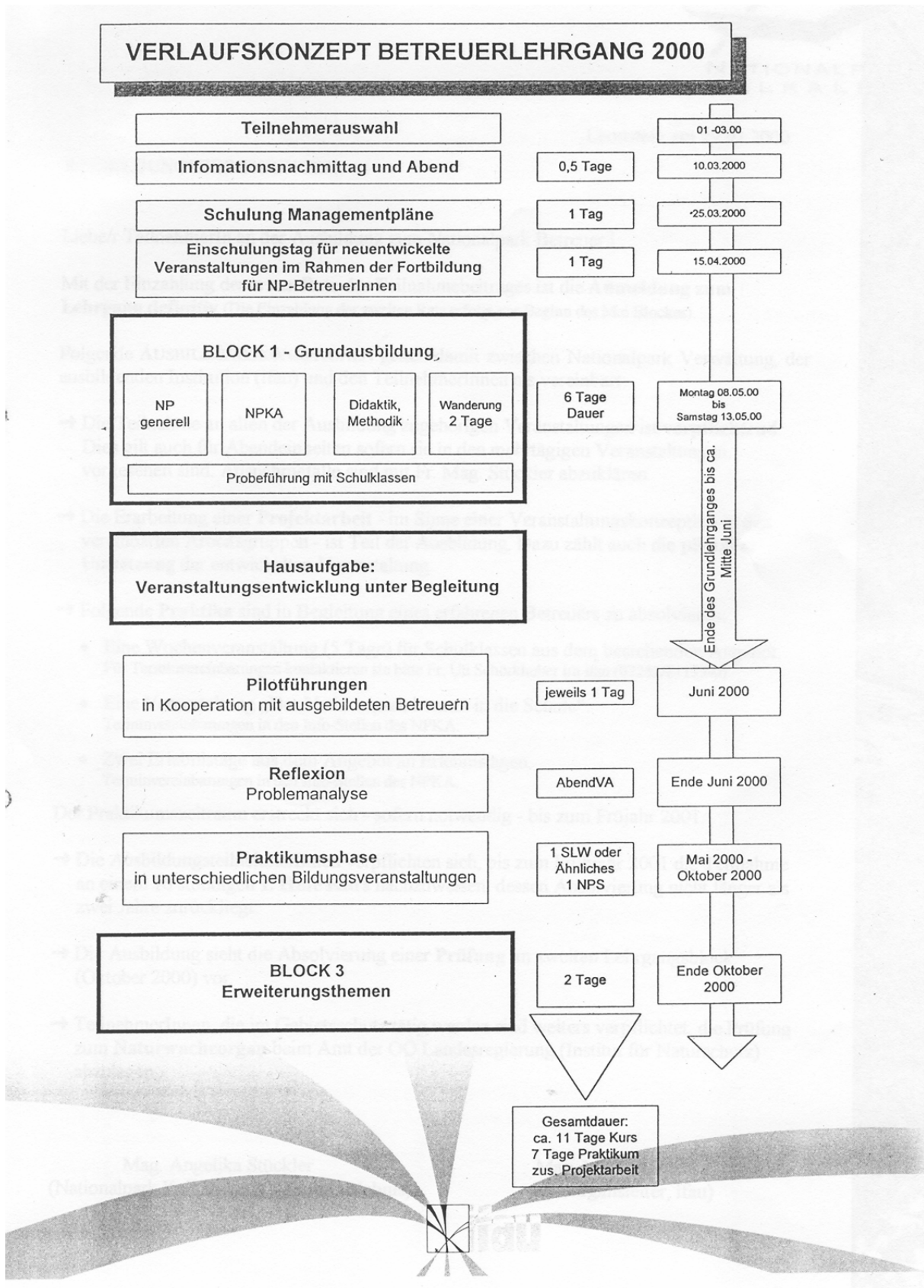
Seminar 14	26.03.2004	Der Karst - Einführung in die Geologie und Ökologie der Höhlen	Stummer	4
	26.-28.03.04	Grundlagen der Zoologie - heimische Tierarten des Alpenraumes	Sziemer	23
Seminar 15	01.-03.04.04	Ausbildung zum Steiermärkischen Nationalpark-Organ	Forster, Hartmann, Kreiner, Riemelmoser	22
Seminar 16	24.-25.04.04	Einführung in die Botanik / Botanik alpiner Lebensräume	Gayl	18
Seminar 17	30.04.-02.05.04	Intensiv-Seminar zur Vorbereitung auf die Führungssaison: Führungstechnik, Exkursionsaufbau, Inhaltsvermittlung	Rosenberger	27
Seminar 18	30.06.2004	Lehrgangs-feedback-Runde	–	8
Seminar 19	06.-07.08.04	Wasser, Weidendom und Einführung in die Limnologie	Stockreiter	8
		Karte und Natur - spielerisch orientieren	Hasitschka	6
Seminar 20	20.-21.08.04	Arbeits- und steuerrechtliche Aspekte des freien Dienstverhältnisses	Moser	2
		Spezielle Natur- und Spielpädagogik	Kargl, Putz	16
		Experimente für Nachtwanderungen/Nachtfalter	Thaller	2
Prüfung	10.-11.09.04	Lehrgangs-Abschlußprüfung mündlich/schriftlich	–	12
Gesamtstundenanzahl				380
Seminar 21	29.-30.05.04 10.-13.06.04	Bootsführerausbildung für den Raft-Betrieb - Zusatzausbildung auf freiwilliger Basis	Stromüller	48

## Hohe Tauern National Park

## Example for 2008

 <b>Seminare zur Ausbildung von Nationalparkbetreuern</b>	 <b>Seminare zur Ausbildung von Nationalparkbetreuern</b>
<p><b>Grundkurs</b></p> <p>Der Grundkurs zur Ausbildung von Nationalparkbetreuern besteht aus zwei Teilen. Im ersten Teil finden Einführungsvorträge zur Nationalparkkunde, Orientierung und Gefahrenkunde, sowie Botanik, Geologie und Glaziologie statt. Die Exkursionsdidaktik wird in Theorie und Praxis gelehrt.</p> <p>Der zweite Teil ist zu den oben genannten Einführungsvorträgen vertiefend. An allen drei Tagen finden Exkursionen statt. Zusätzlich wird ein Schwerpunkt zum Thema „Wildtiere im Nationalpark Hohe Tauern“ gesetzt.</p> <p>Für die Teilnehmer des Grundkurses, die sowohl den ersten als auch den zweiten Teil absolviert haben, besteht die Möglichkeit, eine schriftliche Prüfung inkl. Hausarbeit abzulegen. Der positive Abschluss der Prüfung garantiert jedoch keine Anstellung im Nationalpark Hohe Tauern. Für die Prüfung werden Lernunterlagen zur Verfügung gestellt. Die Prüfer legen den Lernstoff im Rahmen des Grundkurses fest.</p> <p><b>Referenten:</b> Michael BERNT, Nationalpark Hohe Tauern Salzburg          Gunther GRESSMANN, Nationalpark Hohe Tauern Tirol          Karl KRAINER, Institut für Geologie, Universität Innsbruck          Ferdinand RIEDER, Bergführer, Nationalpark Hohe Tauern Salzburg          Angelika STAATS, Leiterin Nationalparkzentrum BIOS, Kärnten          Eberhard STÜBER, Haus der Natur, Salzburg          Wolfgang URBAN, Direktor Nationalpark Hohe Tauern Salzburg</p> <p><b>Teil I/Theorie:</b> Nationalparkzentrum Mittersill, 5730 Mittersill          7. bis 9. April 2008 (Montag bis Mittwoch)</p> <p><b>Teil II/Praxis:</b> findet im Raum Pinzgau statt          31. Juli bis 2. August 2008 (Donnerstag bis Samstag)</p> <p><b>Teilnahmegebühr:</b> € 216,-- (exkl. Unterkunft und Verpflegung)</p> <p><b>Hinweis:</b> Für die Exkursionen in alpinen Gelände sind warme Kleidung, Regenschutz sowie festes Schuhwerk unbedingt erforderlich.</p>	<p><b>Wildtierökologie</b></p> <p>Neben der allgemeinen Ökologie der in den Hohen Tauern vorkommenden Wildtierarten werden in diesem Seminar die Schwerpunkte Beobachten und Erkennen von Verhaltensweisen sowie von direkten (z.B. Art, Alter, Geschlecht) und indirekten (z.B. Trittspuren, Verbiss) Nachweisen behandelt. Weiters werden die Management- und Monitoringmethoden, die im Nationalpark Hohe Tauern angewendet werden vorgestellt, und diskutiert.</p> <p><b>Referenten:</b> Nikolaus EISANK, Nationalpark Hohe Tauern Kärnten          Ferdinand LAINER, Nationalpark Hohe Tauern Salzburg          Gunther GRESSMANN, Nationalpark Hohe Tauern Tirol          N.N.</p> <p><b>Termin:</b> 17. bis 19. September 2008 (Mittwoch bis Freitag)</p> <p><b>Ort:</b> Gasthof Talwirt, 5612 Hüttschlag</p> <p><b>Teilnahmegebühr:</b> € 109,-- (exkl. Unterkunft und Verpflegung)</p> <p><b>Hinweis:</b> Für die Exkursion sind warme Kleidung, Regenschutz sowie festes Schuhwerk unbedingt erforderlich.</p> <p><b>Vertiefende Botanik</b></p> <p><b>Kursinhalte:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Botanische Besonderheiten des Nationalparks Hohe Tauern</li> <li>- Bestimmung und Artenkenntnis</li> <li>- Nutzung bestimmter Pflanzen für Mensch und Tier</li> <li>- Anwendungsmöglichkeiten häufig vorkommender Heilpflanzen</li> </ul> <p><b>Referenten:</b> Konrad PAGITZ, Institut für Botanik, Universität Innsbruck          N.N.</p> <p><b>Termin:</b> 10. bis 11. Juli 2008 (Donnerstag bis Freitag)</p> <p><b>Ort:</b> Nationalparkzentrum BIOS, 9822 Mallnitz</p> <p><b>Teilnahmegebühr:</b> € 72,-- (exkl. Unterkunft und Verpflegung)</p> <p><b>Hinweis:</b> Für die Exkursion sind warme Kleidung, Regenschutz sowie festes Schuhwerk unbedingt erforderlich.</p>

## Kalkalpen National Park





## Neusiedlersee/Seewinkel National Park



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**Kurskalender für den WWF Ausbildungskurs 2006 zur/m ökopädagogischen GruppenbetreuerIn und ExkursionsleiterIn im Nationalpark Neusiedler See Seewinkel**

Die WWF Bildungswerkstätte Seewinkelhof führt seit nunmehr 11 Jahren Naturerlebnistage und Ökologieprojektwochen im Auftrag des Nationalparks Neusiedler See-Seewinkel durch. Zielgruppe dieser intensiven Umweltbildungsarbeit sind vor allem Schulklassen (Schwerpunkt bei der Altersgruppe der 8-14 jährigen). Dieser Ausbildungskurs ermöglicht auch die Tätigkeit als Exkursionsleiter im Nationalpark Neusiedler See Seewinkel.

Die Vorauswahl der KursteilnehmerInnen wird in persönlichen Gesprächen von Ende August 2006 bis September 2006 getroffen. Genaue Termine werden nach Ende der Bewerbungsfrist am 1. August 2006 bekanntgegeben.

Die Kursveranstaltungen finden an der WWF Bildungswerkstätte Seewinkelhof in Apetlon statt. Die Kurskosten belaufen sich inklusive Verpflegung und Unterbringung am Seewinkelhof bei mehrtägigen Veranstaltungen auf 600 €.

<b>Einstiegsveranstaltung:</b> Teambuilding, Einblick in Abläufe, Rolle als GruppenbetreuerIn	02.-03.10.2006
<b>Ökopädagogikseminar:</b> Zielgruppenspezifische Methoden, Spielpädagogik, Konzepte	09.-11.10.2006
<b>Die Welt der Feuchtgebiete I:</b> Seminar zum Wert von intakten Feuchtgebieten für den Menschen, Hintergründe, Methoden	16.-18.10.2006
<b>Biodiversität und Ressourcennutzung:</b> Nachhaltige Nutzung von natürlichen Ressourcen illustriert am didaktischen Konzept des "ökologischen Fußabdrucks"	11.-12.12.2006
<b>WWF und Nationalpark:</b> Strukturen, Grundlagen der Organisationen, Philosophie, Aufgaben	15.-16.01.2007
<b>Die Welt der Feuchtgebiete II:</b> Seminar zum Wert von intakten Feuchtgebieten für den Menschen, Hintergründe, Methoden	28.-31.05.2007
<b>6 ornithologische Exkursionen:</b> Limikolen I +II, Gänse, Enten, Kleinvögel, Schilfvögel, Greifvögel	04.10.2006-30.06.2007
<b>3 Botanikexkursionen</b>	04.10.2006-30.06.2007
<b>2 Exkursionen zu Volkskunde- und Landwirtschaftsthemen:</b>	01.04.-30.06.2007
<b>Kursabschluss</b>	30.6.2007



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## Thayatal National Park

### Nationalpark Thayatal - Betreuer-Ausbildung

#### Rahmenlehrplan

Nr.	Lehrinhalt	Ausbildungstage	Potentielle Referenten
1.1.1.	Didaktik – Umweltbildung in Theorie und Praxis (zielgruppenorientierte Aufbereitung und Methodik von Vorträgen und Exkursionen, Verwendung und Vorbereitung von Requisiten, Wege zum Erleben und Entdecken von Lebensräumen)	1 (VL + EX) ✓	IFAU
1.1.2.	Planung und Gestaltung ökologischer Projekte im Freiland und von Projektwochen	½ ✓	IFAU
1.1.3.	Spezielle Ökopädagogik (Spiel- und Erlebnispädagogik)	1 1/2 (VL + EX) ✓	IFAU, Ch. Kippes
1.1.4.	Kommunikation, Präsentation, Rhetorik, Gruppendynamik, Streßbewältigung, Arbeitstechniken	1 1/2 ✓	IFAU, Ch. Übl
1.1.5.	Verhalten im Gelände/Wanderführerausbildung (Durchführung Wanderführungen, Führungsstrategien, Umgang mit Störungen, Rechtliche Verantwortung, Orientierung im Gelände, Wetter- u. Gefahrenkunde, Rechtliche Grundlagen, Kartenkunde, etc.)	2 (1 VL + 1 EX)	VAVÖ
1.1.6.	Nationalparkwache, Prakt. Erfahrungen	1/2	Helmut Salek
1.1.6.	Erste Hilfe	1	Gerhard Lindner

#### 1.2. Naturraum Nationalpark Thayatal (9-11 Referenten, 13 1/2 Tage, VL + EX)

Nr.	Lehrinhalt	Ausbildungstage	Potentielle Referenten
1.2.1.	Einführung in das Nationalpark Gebiet (topographische Gebietskenntnisse, Nationalpark-Einrichtungen, Wanderwege, etc.)	2 (VL + EX.) ✓	Christian Übl Barbara Guggenberger
1.2.2.	Rahmenbedingungen des Nationalparks mit Land- und Forstwirtschaft/Tourismus/Jagd/Fischerei	1 (VL + EX.) ✓	DI Harald Alexander Barbara Guggenberger
1.2.3.	Naturkundliche Grundlagen und Besonderheiten im Thayatal:		
1.2.3.1.	Allgemeine Zool. (Tiergruppenmerkmale, Artengrundkenntnisse)	½ (VL)	Mag. Freimann
1.2.3.2.	Spezielle Zoologie (Biologie einheimischer Wirbeltiere und Wirbelloser; Vogelkunde - Artenkenntnis, Habitatsprüche; Wasserlebewesen)	1 (EX.)	Mag. Jürgen Pollheimer
1.2.3.3.	Allgemeine Botanik (Systematik, Anatomie, Physiologie, Vegetation Österreichs)	1 (VL + EX.)	Mag. Walter
1.2.3.4.	Spezielle Botanik (Artenkenntnisse), Vegetationskunde, Trockenrasen, Waldvegetation, Forstwirtschaft, Bodenkunde	2 (EX)	Dr. Wrbka, DI Harald Alexander
1.2.3.5.	Allgemeine Ökologie (Grundlagen, Lebensräume, Kreisläufe, Nahrungsketten, Neophyten, etc.)	2 (VL + EX.)	Dr. Peter Sziemer
1.2.3.6.	Spezielle Ökologie/Limnologie (Lebensraum Fluß, Lebensraumansprüche, Anpassungen in Verhalten und Physiologie, etc.), Fischerei	1 (VL + EX.)	Franz Kraus, Rudi Freimann
1.2.4.	Geologie und Geomorphologie	1 (EX)	Reinhard Roetzel (Geol. Bundesanstalt)
1.2.5.	Der Mensch im Thayatal (Besiedelungsgeschichte, Kulturlandschaft, menschl. Nutzung und Nutzungskonflikte, Geschichte(n) u. Kultur der Grenzregion, Sagen, Schätze des Thaytals, Architektur, etc.)	2 (VL + EX.) ✓	Versch. Referenten

#### 1.3. Nationalparke und Naturschutz (3 1/2 Tage)

Nr.	Lehrinhalt	Ausbildungstage	Referent
1.3.1.	Ursprünge und internationale Entwicklung der Nationalpark-Idee und -Zielsetzungen, Nationalparks in Österreich, Nationalpark-Politik in Österreich	½ ✓	Dir. DI Robert Brunner
1.3.2.	Rolle und Bedeutung von Nationalparks im Rahmen des Gesamtnaturschutzes, Weltnaturschutzorganisation IUCN und internationale Naturschutz-Abkommen	½ ✓	Dir. DI Robert Brunner
1.3.3.	Nationalpark Thayatal: Organisation, Gesetz, 15a-Vertrag, Verordnung, Management, Naturschutzfachliche Grundlagen, nö. Naturschutzgesetz, Werdegang des Nationalpark Thayatal	1 1/2 ✓	DI R. Brunner, Helmut Salek
1.3.4.	Národný park Podyjí: Gesetze, Zonierung, Management, NP-Geschichte	1 ✓	Mitarb. Národný park podyjí



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## **INTERNATIONAL RANGER FEDERATION CODE OF ETHICS**

### **Preamble**

The purpose of these canons is to govern the professional conduct of rangers in their relations with the public, their employers and clients, and each other. These canons help to assure just and honourable professional and human relationships, mutual confidence and respect, and competent service to society in the management, protection, and preservation of natural, cultural, and recreational heritages. These canons have been adopted by the member ranger organisations that comprise the International Ranger Federation and can be amended only by the collective membership as outlined in the Bylaws of the International Ranger Federation. The canons apply to all membership categories including honorary members. All member ranger organizations upon joining the Federation agree that their respective membership shall abide by this code as a condition of the organisational membership within the Federation.

### **Canons**

1. A ranger will not misrepresent his/her qualifications nor abilities, and will provide appropriate evidence of such qualifications or abilities upon request of the employer or client.
2. A ranger will take personal responsibility to assure that he/she is qualified to perform those tasks for which he/she has been contracted and will decline to independently perform those tasks for which he/she is not qualified to perform by virtue of education and/or experience. A

ranger/trainee may undertake tasks that he/she is unqualified for only under the direct supervision of competent personnel.

3. A ranger will strive for accurate, current, and increasing knowledge of cultural and natural resource management practices and philosophies, incorporating such knowledge into his/her professional activities, and will share this knowledge with other rangers and his/her employer or client.

4. A ranger will perform his/her duties consistent with the highest standards of professional quality and scientific integrity.

5. A ranger will apply his/her unique knowledge and skills to the public good for the benefit of mankind and for the betterment of the cultural and natural environment.

6. A ranger will not by false statement, innuendo, or dishonest action injure the reputation or professional status of another ranger.

7. A ranger will follow existing laws, regulations, and accepted practices relating to the protection of cultural and natural resources in his/her personal and professional life and, if so empowered, will enforce these fairly and impartially.

8. A ranger will give priority to the protection of the cultural and natural resources in his/her care excepting that the preservation of human life will always take a higher priority.

9. A ranger will not disclose information concerning affairs of his/her employer or client without express permission to do so, except where such confidence would contribute to the significant degradation of the cultural or natural environment, or where the health, safety, or welfare of the public would be compromised. In such a situation the ranger is obligated to notify the employer or client in writing. A ranger shall in all other ways perform his/her duties in a manner that reflects loyalty to his/her employer/client.

10. A ranger will not accept compensation or expenses from more than one employer for the same service except with the full knowledge and consent of all concerned parties. A ranger will also inform a prospective or current employer or client of any professional or personal conflicts of interest, whether real or apparent, which may affect the ranger's ability to perform the stated duties.



11. A ranger having reasonable evidence of a breach of this code by another ranger is obliged to bring such conduct to the attention of his/her ranger association.

12. A ranger will advertise services only in a dignified and truthful manner; such advertisement may include reference to fees charged.

13. A ranger will base public comment regarding resource issues upon accurate knowledge and will not distort or withhold pertinent information in order to substantiate a point of view. When making such comment a ranger will clearly indicate on whose behalf the statements are made.

14. A ranger will not knowingly participate in resource management operations that deviate from accepted professional standards regarding the cultural or natural environment. In achieving this, the ranger will seek out the advice of other experts and specialists in the appropriate fields and will work cooperatively with other rangers.

15. A ranger will give credit for the methods, ideas, and assistance obtained from others.

16. A ranger will be a tireless advocate for the protection and preservation of the world's natural, cultural, and recreational heritage. He/she will utilize all appropriate means to educate employers, clients, and the public regarding the importance of wise resource use by the current generation and the need to preserve resources for future generations.