

Health Tourism in Croatia: Tradition, Competitiveness, Sustainability and Effects of New Investments

Zdravstveni turizam u Hrvatskoj: tradicija, konkurentnost, održivost i učinci novih investicija

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Introduction and aim: Health tourism in the Republic of Croatia has preserved a long-standing tradition in the international environment since ancient times. With the achievement of a high level of quality and variety of service provision in all forms of health tourism from spa, medical, wellness, sports and recreational tourism, and through natural geological prerequisites, wealth of water, excellent traffic location, climatic benefits and long-standing tradition, the service began to be finally realized through specialization potential for stronger development of this segment of tourism in Croatia. By analyzing the advantages and disadvantages of health tourism, and through examples of good practice, it is shown that encouraging investments in the accelerated development of health tourism services affects the achievement of competitiveness at the regional and international level and the possibility of developing and investing in health tourism, as a leader of sustainable health tourism in the international environment.

Methodology: Based on the analyzes of the state of health tourism and investments and new investments in health tourism, a projection of estimates of investments in health tourism and the effects of investments on the Republic of Croatia and the EU member states was made, and through the conducted research by online survey of providers of health-tourism services on the domestic market and providers of the same service in EU member countries.

Results: By evaluating the effects of new investments in health tourism in Croatia and through the perception of bidders in assessing the assumptions for additional new investments and expanding the range of services in health tourism, with a different approach to health tourism from the perspective of bidders and the impact of new investments, it will be determined to what extent the determinants of sustainable tourism development are successfully implemented in practical application in the development of health tourism.

Conclusion: The specificity of health tourism in Croatia, along with additional investments and long-standing tradition, has great potential for the realization of a year-round tourist offer based on long-term environmental preservation and achieving self-sustainability.

Keywords: Health tourism; Competitiveness; Investments; Tourist offer; Quality; Sustainable development; Republic of Croatia; EU

LITERATURE

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