

## STUDY REGARDING THE SPA TOURISM IN ROMANIA

ANCA GABRIELA HANDARIC<sup>1</sup>, IOAN CSOSZ<sup>1</sup>, RAMONA CIOLAC<sup>1</sup>, ANA-MARIANA DINCU<sup>1</sup>, LAURA STRĂIN<sup>1</sup>, RAUL PAȘCALĂU<sup>1</sup>, ADA CRISTINA<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Banat's University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine "King Michael I of Romania" from Timisoara, Faculty of Agricultural Management, Timisoara, Romania, anca\_handaric@yahoo.com*

**Abstract:** *In recent decades, through its important social and economic benefits, health tourism has become a major segment of international tourism market, through witch are focused important human and material resources, with a more profound involvement of science and technology, of the provision of tourism and medical services of a complex nature and of high quality level, called to satisfy the vital demands of the modern man, determined by the evolution of living conditions and health status of the population.*

**Key words:** tourism, services, health, health tourism

### INTRODUCTION

Spa tourism does not addresses only to those with medical problems, but also to those who want to relax, to regain vitality and a good physical, mental and spiritual condition.

Because of this, in the last decades, through its important social and economic effects, health tourism has become a major segment of international tourist market, through which focuses important human and material resources, with an deeper involvement of science and technology, of the provision of some medical and tourism services of a complex nature and of high quality level, called to satisfy the vital demands of the modern man, determined by the evolution of living conditions and health status of the population. [1]

Tourism is manifest itself as a phenomenon with wide implications in human existence through direct and positive impact on the social, economic, cultural and educational sectors of the society.

Spa tourism is a major sector in the Romanian tourism industry due to its specific features. It is known that almost one third of thermal and mineral waters of witch benefit Europe is concentrated in Romania and their effects on health have been documented over the centuries.[1]

Spa medicine acquires on the day that passes new meanings, along with social and economic development and growth and modernization of material base for treatments in spas resorts. [1]

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research made has focused particularly the development and functioning of the spa tourism from Romania.

The data necessary for the present study have resulted from consultation of the statistic specialty material, such as Ministry of Regional Development and Tourism documents, Organization of Spa Tourism from Romania, Stock and Spa Tourism Forum.

## RESEARCH RESULTS

Spa tourism is the only form of tourism in our country which is based on a permanent potential, of a high complexity, practically inexhaustible. Romania is among European countries with a remarkable spa heritage. We have the chance that 1/3 of thermal and mineral waters from the continent to find in our country. This value is increased by the complexity of natural factors, meaning retrieving in the same resort of the main environmental factors, along with a wide range of minerals for treatment, with polifactorial beneficial effects and the existence in Romania of all types of mineral spas that can be used across the spa treatment profiles. [8]

In medical specialized circles from the world is well known that Romania has a great wealth of resources with therapeutic value: mineral water, pits, mud and therapeutic lakes, spread over almost the entire surface of the country in different climate areas.

The great variety of these resources is due to geographical location and complex geological structure of the earth's crust of our country. Their presence has allowed them to be used for treatment since ancient times: thus were used in therapeutic purpose the thermal mineral water springs from Baile Herculane. In time other resorts as Felix and Vatra Dornei enrolled their names with Herculane, representing through the virtues of their curative mineral waters, renowned treatment centers in the Central European region. Later, another resort from Romania, Calimanesti-Caciulata, gains an international fame, mineral waters from here being recommended in the treatment of renal disease. [8]

In our country there are almost all kinds of mineral waters - oligomineral, alkaline-earth, chloride, sodium, iodine, sulfur, soda, hot etc.- with a wide variety in terms of chemical composition, degree of mineralization and their temperature .

Therapeutic muds are peat or mineral, and mofettes - natural gas therapeutic emanations - containing carbon dioxide or sulfide hydrogen.

The development of spas occurred in conditions of growing demands of treatment with natural therapeutic factors and enrichment and updating the content and modern spa medicine, which today finds its scientific foundation for many of the traditional methods used empirically in the past. [6]

Balneoclimate cures become part of the health care system, natural therapeutic factors being considered in the present, on the one hand, remedy with great value, in some situations being indispensable, irreplaceable in the development of prophylactic effects, treatment or recovery, on the other hand, an alternative to pharmacological drug therapy. [8]

Balneoclimate methods represent traditional methods, based on lengthy observations of many generations of doctors balneology, which took into account the particular character, specifically, by the individuality of each natural factor separately: bioclimate, mineral waters, mud, etc. [8]

Our country now has more than 160 resorts and localities with natural therapeutic factors. In many resorts were built modern facilities, such as hotels for treatment and sanatorium complexes, where diagnostic and treatment services are offered in the same building, eg. Baile Calimanesti-Caciulata, Balie Govora, Tusnad, Olanesti etc. [2]

Another peculiarity lies in the geographical distribution of natural treatment factors, which cause that in relatively small territorial areas to meet numerous sources of mineral water with different concentrations and chemical compositions, which allows simultaneous treatment to the same patient, of more diseases associated. So, the resorts where it can be treated several disease categories are: Covasna- cardiovascular, digestive and metabolic diseases; Călimănești -Caciulata - diseases of the kidney, digestive, respiratory and

musculoskeletal; Olanesti - diseases of the digestive system of the kidney and allergic diseases. [2]

Individualized association of the appropriate medication and dietary nutrition, and providing an appropriate sanatorium regime properly to the therapeutic profile of each treatment conditions gives the possibility of performing a complex treatment and raise spa resorts on the Valea Oltului to the level of some curative and prophylactic centers of great importance for improving health condition of the population. [2]

Balneoclimate resorts for cure and rest known in the postwar period an unprecedented development both in our country but also in a large number of European countries with tradition in this area. [2]

In our country were built in balneoclimate resorts and on the Black Sea modern hotels, complex treatment facilities, equipped with machinery and equipment of the newest types for therapeutic use and rest. Many upgraded balneoclimate resorts entered into the international spa circuit and are sought, annually, by tens of thousands of foreigners from European countries or from other continents. In this context a special attention has been paid, on the one hand, to the recovery of natural therapeutic factors (mineral water, therapeutic muds, pits, climate), and on the other hand, to growth and continuous improvement of healthcare services, by appointment medical spa clinics of medical staff specialist with the best possible preparation. [3]

Therapeutic and social interest for treatment in balneoclimate resorts, in a continuous growing in many countries, including our country, has determined the balneology development of international, explainable, first, by the efficiency of this treatment to the broad categories of chronic patients. [5]

Besides the immediate results, follow-up treatment, which by Romanian or foreign medical statistics show impressive improvements of the subjective and objective symptomatology, an important echo meant had a series of studies on the results in time of some repeated treatment, using efficiency economic indicators, or temporary work incapacity caused by diseases for which were practiced spa treatments. [5]

Spa medicine is closely related to physical medicine and is a specialty studying therapeutic methods witch studies and implement therapeutic medical physical means (heat, light, electricity, electromagnetic, mechanical, etc.) and natural therapeutic factors (climate, mineral water, mud etc.).

Varied landscape of our country has facilitated the existence of numerous natural treatment factors that have led to a huge number of spa resorts, some of them of national interest, others of local, regional interest. [7]

The main factor that led to the development of spa tourism is given by the large number of springs in the country. Curative qualities of these waters are famous all over Europe since the past, being also very popular nowadays. The oldest spa resort from us, Baile Herculane has been documentary attested since the time of the Roman occupation.

In our country there are 160 resorts and spa localities holding mineral resources, from which 24 are considered of national importance with the recognition also on the European level.[7]

The 24 resorts of national importance were ranked based on the classification system from Romania according to the degree of their equipment.

The spa tourism potential is a special category of tourist resources, being the oldest and characteristic form of tourism practiced in Romania - health tourism.

It contains mineral and thermal waters, mud and therapeutic gases, salt lakes and therapeutic salt. [7]

### Classification of balneoclimate resorts

#### a) by importance:

- Resorts of international importance: Poiana Brasov, Sinaia, Predeal, Borsec, Sovata, Eforie Nord si Sud, Mamaia, Mangalia, Baile Herculane etc;
- Resorts of national importance - are resorts that through equipments can not compete with large resorts from Europe or other parts of the world (Geoagiu, Moneasa, Busteni, Covasna, Băile Olănești, Borșa, Păltiniș, Lacul Roșu etc.);
- Resorts of regional importance are destinations for tourists from a particular part of the country serving, generally, to short-term tourism (Bazna, Calan-Bai, Cheia, Lipova, Pucioasa, Ranca, Stana de Vale, Vata de Jos, Voineasa etc.);
- Resorts of local importance - characteristic to short term tourism (Bixad, Cojocna, Malnas - Bai, Lacul Sarat, Ocele Mari, Baile Homorod, Ocna Dej, Semenic, 2 Mai etc.) [8]

#### b) by function:

- Climatic resorts that provides a suitable place to long term rest (holidays), having a positive effect on the body. These spas have specific installations and facilities such as beaches, solariums, swimming pools, sports fields, marked trails etc., are located in the mountains and subCarpathian area, but also in the coastal zone. From these, the most representative are: Busteni, Breaza, Baita, Cheia, Izvorul Muresului, Paltinis, Poiana Tapului, Ranca, Timisul de Sus si de Jos, 2 Mai, Costinesti, Navodari, Venus, Saturn, Aurora etc. [8]
- Spa resorts, specific to curative tourism, health care, are widespread in the Carpathians, Subcarpathian Transylvanian Basin, Western and Eastern Plain and the east of Romanian Plain even to the seaside. They have an important role in the prevention, alleviation or cure of some diseases (Amara, Bazna, Băile Felix, Buziaș, Lipova, Pucioasa, Sărata Monteoru, Techirghiol, Târgu Ocna etc. [8]
- Resorts with complex spa function - are the most important resorts, due to their multilateral specialization, both for leisure and for treatment due to larger accommodation capacity (Sovata, Voineasa, Baile Tusnad, Baile Herculane, Borsec, Calimanesti – Caciulata, Eforie Nord, Mangalia, Moneasa etc.);
- Resorts for winter sports grow in mountainous areas that have favorable climatic conditions, persistent snow cover, slope corresponding to appropriate reception facilities (Predeal, Poiana Brasov Semenic, Azuga, Sinaia etc.) [8]

### CONCLUSIONS

Spa tourism involves both the development of complex recovery treatments in balneoclimate resorts, and conducting tours and trips in the surroundings and rest.

From all the segments of tourism, health tourism is the only form of tourism that is based on a permanent potential, of a high complexity, practically inexhaustible and independent of weather conditions; so health tourism is not influenced by seasonality.

### REFERENCES

1. **BERLESCU, ELENA**, (1998), *Enciclopedia de balneo-climatologie a României*, Editura ALL, București;
2. **CÂNDEA, MELINDA** și colab., (2003), *Potențialul turistic al României și amenajarea turistică a spațiului*, Editura Universitară, București;
3. **CIOLAC, RAMONA, PETROMAN, CORNELIA, PETROMAN, I.**,

- RUJESCU, C., STANCIU, S., MARTIN, SIMONA, TUCUDEAN, ANDREEA ROMANA**, *Research on agro-tourism stage and traditional products recovery through this activity in the Alps Mountain - Trento Province*, The sixth international conference “Rural development 2013: Innovations and Sustainability”, Faculty of Economics and Management, Aleksandras Stulginskis University, Universiteto g. 10, Akademija, LT – 53361, Kauno raj., Lithuania. Pg. 74-79, Volume 6, Book 1, ISSN 2345-0916
4. **LILE, RAMONA, IACOB, MIHAELA IOANA**, *Mission and social responsibility in business*, INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTIONS, FROM THE GLOBALIZATION AND POST-GLOBALIZATION PERSPECTIVE, VOL II: CHANGE MANAGEMENT: NEW COORDINATES, 16th International Economic Conference - IECS 2009, pg.152-157
  5. **MARINESCU, G.**, (1903), *Studii asupra unor stațiuni balneare din țară și străinătate*, Atelierele Grafice I. V. Socecu, București;
  6. **MARTIN, SIMONA CRISTINA, LILE, RAMONA, CIOLAC, RAMONA, CHIȘ S.S.**, *Analysis of the quality of tourism services within the tourist accommodation framework in Romania*, SGEM International Multidisciplinary Scientific Conferences on Social Sciences & Arts, SGEM Conference on Political Sciences, Law, Finance, Economics & Tourisms, section Economics & Tourism, Conference Proceedings Volume III, pg.49-56, Albena, Bulgaria, ISBN 978-619-7105-27-8, ISSN 2367-5659, 2014
  7. **MINCIU, RODICA**, (1995) “*Amenajarea turistica a teritoriului*”, Editura Iylvy, Bucuresti;
  8. **GLAVAN, VASILE**, (1995) “*Geografia turismului in Romania*”, Editura Fundatiei Romania de maine, Bucuresti;
  9. **TONEA, ELENA**, *How can be sustainable investments efficient from economical point of view*, 37th International Symposium of Agricultural Engineering, Actual tasks on Agricultural Engineering-Zagreb, Vol. 37, Opatija, Croatia, Thompson Reuters Web of Science, 2009