

Mozolev O. M. Methodological approaches to studying the organization of medical and health tourism in Ukraine. *Journal of Education, Health and Sport*. 2023;47(1): 187-196. eISSN 2391-8306. DOI <http://dx.doi.org/10.12775/JEHS.2023.47.01.017>  
<https://apcz.umk.pl/JEHS/article/view/55953>  
<https://zenodo.org/record/14033481>

The journal has had 40 points in Ministry of Education and Science of Poland parametric evaluation. Annex to the announcement of the Minister of Education and Science of 17.07.2023 No. 32318.  
Has a Journal's Unique Identifier: 201159. Scientific disciplines assigned: Physical Culture Sciences (Field of Medical sciences and health sciences); Health Sciences (Field of Medical Sciences and Health Sciences).  
Punkty Ministerialne z 2019 - aktualny rok 40 punktów. Załącznik do komunikatu Ministra Edukacji i Nauki z dnia 17.07.2023 Lp. 32318. Posiada Unikatowy Identyfikator Czasopisma: 201159.  
Przypisane dyscypliny naukowe: Nauki o kulturze fizycznej (Dziedzina nauk medycznych i nauk o zdrowiu); Nauki o zdrowiu (Dziedzina nauk medycznych i nauk o zdrowiu).

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Received: 29.07.2023. Revised: 21.08.2023. Accepted: 28.08.2023. Published: 29.08.2023.

## **Methodological approaches to studying the organization of medical and health tourism in Ukraine**

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### **Abstract**

The article reveals methodological approaches to the study of the problem of the organization of medical tourism in Ukraine. It was found that in the modern scientific literature among researchers there is no unified view on the definition of the concept of "medical and health tourism". The author defines that medical and health tourism is a trip to resort areas for the purpose of health and treatment. The goal of health tourism is the comprehensive use of natural healing factors and physical activity for therapeutic and preventive purposes. It was established that the sanatorium-resort base of Ukraine is widely represented by sanatoriums of various forms of ownership and departmental subordination, which are located in different regions of Ukraine. Various natural healing resources are widely used for treatment and recovery: mineral waters for both internal and external use, healing mud, ozokerite, clay and salt solutions. Ukraine has a rich recreational and tourist potential and has significant prerequisites for the formation of a highly developed health and tourism economy. But today, the recreational and touristic possibilities of Ukraine are

significantly limited. Since the beginning of the war in Ukraine, medical and health facilities in Odesa, Mykolaiv and Kherson regions have been repeatedly bombed and destroyed. Therefore, in the conditions of martial law, the development of health tourism in the Black Sea region is problematic and temporarily impractical. The most promising and necessary is the development of health tourism in the Carpathian region and the regions close to it. Among all regions of Ukraine, almost a third of the recreational potential is concentrated in the Carpathian region.

**Key words:** medical and health tourism; recreational and tourist potential; development in the conditions of war; methodological approaches of research.

## **МЕТОДОЛОГІЧНІ ПІДХОДИ ДО ВИВЧЕННЯ ОРГАНІЗАЦІЇ ЛІКУВАЛЬНО-ОЗДОРОВЧОГО ТУРИЗМУ В УКРАЇНІ**

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В статті розкриваються методологічні підходи до дослідження проблеми організації лікувально-оздоровчого туризму в Україні. З'ясовано, що у сучасній науковій літературі серед дослідників немає єдиного погляду на визначення поняття «лікувально-оздоровчий туризм». Автором визначено, що лікувально-оздоровчий туризм – це подорож до курортних місцевостей з метою оздоровлення та лікування. Мета лікувально-оздоровчого туризму – комплексне використання природних лікувальних факторів і рухової діяльності в лікувально-профілактичних цілях. Встановлено, що санаторно-курортна база України широко представлена санаторіями різних форм власності та відомчого підпорядкування, які розташовані в різних регіонах України. Для лікування та оздоровлення широко використовуються різноманітні природні лікувальні ресурси: мінеральні води як для внутрішнього, так і для зовнішнього застосування, лікувальні грязі, озокерит, глини та соляні розчини. Україна володіє багатим рекреаційним і туристичним потенціалом та має значні передумови для формування високорозвиненого лікувально-оздоровчого та туристичного господарства. Але на сьогодні рекреаційно-туристичні можливості України суттєво

обмежені. З початком війни в Україні лікувально-оздоровчі заклади в Одеській, Миколаївській та Херсонській областях неодноразово підвергались бомбардуванню та знищенню. Тому, в умовах воєнного стану, розвиток лікувально-оздоровчого туризму у Причорноморському регіоні є проблематичним та тимчасово недоцільним. Найбільш перспективним та необхідним є розвиток лікувально-оздоровчого туризму у Карпатському регіоні та наближених до нього областях. Серед усіх регіонів України майже третина рекреаційного потенціалу зосереджена саме у Карпатському регіоні.

**Ключові слова:** лікувально-оздоровчий туризм; рекреаційно-туристичний потенціал; розвиток в умовах війни; методологічні підходи дослідження.

**The statement of the problem...** Medical and health tourism is one of the priority directions in the matter of preserving and improving the state of health and prolonging the active life of the population of Ukraine. Recreational resources of Ukraine represent a wide range of various natural sources, including healing mud, sea beaches, a large amount of mineral waters, etc. As a result of Russia's military aggression against Ukraine, the number of injured persons, both military and civilian, has increased. They need treatment, rehabilitation and restoration of both physical and psycho-emotional state. The number of people affected by military aggression is constantly increasing. Therefore, at the current stage and in the future, the development of health tourism in Ukraine will gain more and more importance.

**Analysis of previous research and publications...** The following scientists were involved in the theory and practice of the development of medical tourism: K. Babov, O. Kravets, A. Ryabev, M. Rutynskyi, V. Sabat, H. Zavarika and others. The issue of the organization of health tourism and its place in the system of the tourist industry is revealed in the works of foreign and domestic scientists: O. Babkin, V. Novikova, A. Pidhainyi, V. Petranivskyi, M. Rutynskyi, O. Vitetnev and others.

**The aim of the study** To reveal methodological approaches to the study of the organization of health tourism in Ukraine.

**Main body** Medical and health tourism has been around for a long time. As noted by S. Chernovskyi and N. Fisherman, already in the second century BC, ancient Greece was famous for the Asclepius resort, where spas were formed on healing springs. Subsequently, such places were very popular for the recreation of the wealthy population, where, in addition to the healing properties of the environment, they began to offer accompanying entertainment services in the form of gambling and concerts [1].

On the territory of Ukraine, health tourism began to emerge on the basis of the mineral waters of the Transcarpathian region, where the first resorts were opened in the 19th century. According to N. Gabchak, the infrastructure of medical tourism underwent significant development during the time Transcarpathia was part of Czechoslovakia. During this period, health centers were formed in Svalyavshchyna, Mukachivshchyna, Uzhhorodshchyna, and Berehyvshchyna [2].

Currently, there is no single definition of the concept of "medical and health tourism" because it combines the interaction of different types of institutions (tourist, sanatorium-resort, hospitals, regular recreation places). In each place, a different idea about the definition of this concept is formed. Scientists also do not give a single definition for "health tourism".

According to A. Vetitnev medical and health tourism is "a type of tourist activity, which provides, as the main motive of the trip, for tourists, at their own or corporate expense, to receive a complex of medical and diagnostic, rehabilitation, preventive and recreational services provided in areas other than their place of permanent residence and have at their disposal the natural, material and human resources necessary for this" [3].

A. Babkin understands medical and health tourism as "a type of tourism that involves the movement of residents and non-residents within state borders and beyond state borders for a period of not less than 20 hours and not more than 6 months for health purposes, prevention and treatment of various body diseases of a person" [4].

V. Novikova characterizes medical and health tourism as "a type of ecological tourism, a type of sanatorium-resort treatment, which is based on the full or partial recovery of the population, mostly with the help of various trips" [5].

According to the definition of M. Rutynskyi, "healing tourism can be tentatively classified as a special type of tourism, namely, tourism with a medical purpose. In this case, this definition includes not only trips to the resort, but also any other trips for the purpose of treatment, for example, for an operation in a foreign clinic (outbound tourism)" [6].

L. Ustymenko defines medical tourism as "a trip to resort areas for the purpose of recovery, treatment and rehabilitation" [7].

We have summarized the concept of medical and health tourism, which can be formulated as follows: medical and health tourism is a specialized type of tourism of different durations, the main goal of which is to restore health or prevent the occurrence of diseases, using natural resources comprehensively and rationally for this purpose.

The key driving force behind the development of health tourism is the presence of a large base of natural resources, which are available in sufficient variety in our country, which allows for the development and popularization of this direction.

As noted by H. Zavarik [8] promising diversity of natural resources of Ukraine can be detailed by the presence in the country of:

- reliefs of most forms;
- caves (mainly karst caves);
- mountain reservoirs;
- sea coasts;
- different-temperature mineral springs and therapeutic deposits;
- forests, mud, etc.

The cost of health and wellness tourism services can be attributed to the category of expensive in the tourism sector, taking into account the use and application of precious natural medical resources, means for their exploitation, supported by qualified trained personnel and provision of appropriate regular nutrition for vacationers.

Also, similar to health centers, the services of medical and health infrastructure include comfortable accommodation conditions and sports and health programs, which significantly increases the final cost of such health recreation compared to other types. In addition to medical services, the resort can provide additional cultural programs and physical activity activities adapted to the medical and health course.

The sanatorium-resort base of Ukraine is widely represented by sanatoriums of various forms of ownership and departmental subordination, which are located in different regions of Ukraine. A variety of natural healing resources are widely used for treatment and recovery: mineral water for both internal and external use, healing mud, ozokerite, bishophyte, clay and preformed physical factors.

Scientist O. M. Kravets [9] claims that the basis of health tourism is the science of resort science, which was formed as the number of resorts increased and, accordingly, the accumulation of observations and conclusions regarding the complex and long-term therapeutic and preventive effect of the interaction of natural resources and the environment. At the present stage, the research of social needs in spa treatment and the formation of a complex scientific approach to ways of satisfying these needs is added to the tasks of this science.

It should be noted that in the current conditions, medical and health services occupy a certain place in the tourism market of Ukraine, but their formation is just taking place and this

issue will become more acute in the post-war period, therefore, the medical and health tourism market, with the necessary sanatorium and resort infrastructure, will require its improvement and general state support for its development.

Traditionally, the Black Sea region and the regions adjacent to the Carpathian Mountains are the most common areas for the development of health tourism in Ukraine. This is facilitated by a mild climate, clean air, a large amount of mineral water, and the presence of medical facilities of various orientations.

The medical and health potential of the Black Sea region of Ukraine is due primarily to the opportunity to perform medical procedures and restore health on the shores of the Black Sea. With the beginning of military aggression, medical and health facilities in Odesa, Mykolaiv and Kherson regions were repeatedly bombed and destroyed. Therefore, we believe that in the conditions of martial law, the development of health tourism in the Black Sea region is problematic and temporarily impractical.

In our opinion, the most promising and necessary is the development of health tourism in the Carpathian region and the regions close to it. Among all regions of Ukraine, almost a third of the recreational potential is concentrated in the Carpathian region, which combines Zakarpattia, Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk, Chernivtsi and the south of Khmelnytskyi region. The peculiarity of this region is relatively high environmental safety and a much lower impact of military operations on the natural environment. The nature of the Carpathians has suffered minor losses and in many places has preserved its original state. The combination of a large number of natural recreational resources contributes to the development of health tourism in the Carpathian region and its neighboring regions [10].

The Ukrainian Carpathians have large reserves of mineral water, which is used in medical and wellness procedures. More than half of the healing springs are located in Zakarpattia Oblast. Among them are such types of water as: sodium-calcium, chloride-sodium and bicarbonate. It is used in the sanatoriums "Shayan", "Polyana", "Sonyachne Zakarpattia" and "Synyak". In Zakarpattia Oblast, there are springs with mineral water in 235 villages. In total, about 700 sources were investigated, which can be divided into 30 types. There are about 50 thermal springs in the flat parts of the Transcarpathian region. The main balneological resorts of the region are the villages of Solotvino, Shayan, Berehove, Kosyno, Soymy, Polyana, Sinyak and others [11].

Lviv region leads among the regions of Ukraine in terms of natural and recreational resources. The main balneological resorts of the region include Truskavets, the territory of which includes a large number of health and wellness and sanatorium-resort facilities. A

feature of medical and health recovery in sanatoriums of the city of Truskavets is the use of mineral water with an increased content of organic substances. Another well-known sanatorium-resort place in the Lviv region is the village of Skhidnytsia, on the territory of which there are 38 springs and 17 wells of mineral water "Naftusya", also known for its mineral water of the sanatorium-resort complex "Morshinkurort" [12].

Ivano-Frankivsk region has three types of landscapes: plain, foothills and mountains. The climatic resort of Yaremche is located on the territory of the natural national park. This is the most famous recreation center of Prykarpattia, where there are about 45 resort-type sanatoriums. The main balneological resorts of the region: "Mizun" and "Bukovel". The "Bukovel" medical and health center is a balneological, climatic and ski resort. Sanatoriums provide the highest level of service, new hotels, SPA centers, and children's camps are built every year. All facilities where vacationers are treated are equipped with first-class equipment, and qualified specialists work here. The resort welcomes tourists all year round. Among the sanatoriums, the balneological sanatoriums "Kosiv" and "Sheshory" have a significant impact on the effectiveness of medical and health tourism.

Chernivtsi region has its medical and health tourism resources. To date, 64 mineral springs are known, some of them have not yet been fully explored and therefore are not used. Most of the well-known springs by chemical composition belong to chloride-sodium mineral waters, these are: "Brusnytska", "Bukovynska", "Zelenchanska", "Valya Kuzminska", and the most valuable of them is water with a hydrogen sulfide composition, containing sodium components of the Krasnoilsky spring deposits Northern Bukovyna is also known for its healing mud in the villages of Brusnytsia, Chereschenko, Shcherbnytsia, Kostyntsi and others [13]

Today, the sanatorium-resort base of Ukraine is widely represented by world-famous resorts - Truskavets, Morshin, Myrhorod, Khmilnyk, Odesa, and others, where natural medicinal resources are widely used for treatment and recovery, there are modern medical and diagnostic facilities, comfortable conditions have been created for accommodation and food. Many sanatoriums have swimming pools, saunas, sports fields, beaches, cosmetology rooms, gyms with exercise machines, use wellness programs, SPA procedures, a wide range of excursion services, etc.

**Conclusions** Medical and wellness tourism is a trip to resort areas for the purpose of recovery and treatment. The goal of medical and health tourism is the comprehensive use of natural healing factors and motor activity for medical and preventive purposes.

Ukraine, possessing a rich recreational and tourist potential, has significant prerequisites for the formation of a highly developed health-care and tourism economy. Unfortunately, the recreational and touristic opportunities of Ukraine are significantly limited today. In the conditions of martial law, the development of health tourism in the Carpathian region and the regions close to it is the most promising and necessary.

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