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PhD thesis topic: Impact of medical tourism on structural changes in health tourism in West Pomeranian voivodeship.

PhD thesis in the field of economic sciences, written under the supervision of
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Summary of dissertation

Health tourism is a relatively young and dynamically developing field of the economy, especially in regions with a high tourism potential. Literature review revealed that there is no integrated theoretical framework for a comprehensive study of the medical tourism industry on a regional basis. The PhD thesis deals with the analysis of the growth and development of the health and medical tourism sector in a synthetic approach, as well as examining the mutual relations between medical and health tourism in the West Pomeranian Voivodeship and determining how the regularities derived from this relationship affect the structural changes in health tourism in this region.

The main purpose of the doctoral dissertation was to determine the impact of medical tourism on the development of health tourism in the West Pomeranian Voivodeship. The structure of the medical tourism market was described and its place in health tourism in Western Pomerania was determined. Determinants of the development of the medical tourism market have been identified and the medical fields in which the centres providing medical tourism services in Western Pomerania specialize have been identified. The role of medical tourism in the socio-economic development of the West Pomeranian Voivodeship was also established. Research hypotheses: H1: There is a clear cognitive gap in theoretical and empirical considerations about health tourism and its structure. H2: Medical tourism occupies a key place in the health tourism of the West Pomeranian Voivodeship. H3: The development of the medical tourism sector significantly increases the attractiveness and dynamics of the development of the health tourism market in Western Pomerania. H4: Medical tourism is of key importance for the socio-economic development of the West Pomeranian Region.

The research methods used in the dissertation were literature studies, a diagnostic survey based on a direct interview based on research questionnaires and the analysis of existing data. To analyse the collected from 260 entities operating in the health and medical tourism industry radix data, the methods of multidimensional comparative analysis were used, including taxonomic methods, which were used to divide the studied phenomena according to the adopted criteria. The entire research process was completed with a forecast of the development potential of the studied region, with particular emphasis on the most attractive sub-regions in which medical tourism developed dynamically in the analysed years.

During the research, the structure of the health tourism market in the West Pomeranian Voivodeship was illustrated, which had not been presented in the research before; the structure of facilities providing medical tourism services in the medical services market was determined; the impact of the development of the medical tourism sector on health tourism in Western Pomerania was determined; identified which offers from the medical tourism sector are considered attractive by patients; indicators of the attractiveness of the offer of a medical facility serving domestic and foreign tourists in Western Pomerania were established.

The hypothesis H1 was verified in chapter I: Existence of a clear cognitive gap in theoretical and empirical deliberations on health tourism and its structure. The methods of multidimensional statistical analysis used in the work, including the discriminant analysis, which is the starting point for the taxonomic assessment of the distribution and concentration of medical facilities providing services in the field of medical tourism, made it possible to verify

and, consequently, confirm the research hypotheses H2, H3, H4. In chapters III and IV of the dissertation, a substantive analysis was carried out on the basis of the conducted empirical research, as a result of which the hypotheses H2 and H3 were verified and proved: H2: Medical tourism occupies a key place in health tourism in the West Pomeranian Voivodeship; H3: The development of the medical tourism sector increases the dynamics of development and changes the structure, and increases the attractiveness of the health tourism market in West Pomerania, enriching spa treatment and SPA & Wellness services with various medical services. Chapter V of the work contains recommendations on the directions of development of the medical tourism market, assesses the impact of medical tourism on the socio-economic development of the West Pomeranian region, and verifies the hypothesis H4: Medical tourism affects the socio-economic development of the West Pomeranian region. The significance of medical tourism in health tourism was assessed both on the basis of the share of revenues from medical tourism in the revenues of health tourism and tourism in Western Pomerania in general, while the analysis of the structure of the medical tourism market of the voivodeship was based on a discriminant analysis allowing to determine statistics of the distribution of facilities in terms of regions or regions. statistics of the distribution of revenues from medical tourism according to the adopted classes and groups.

The added value that the work brings to the development of economic sciences in the discipline of economics, and in particular to the problems of analysing the growth and development of the health and medical tourism sector in a synthetic approach, is brought to the cognitive dimension (theoretical and empirical gap), the methodological dimension and the application dimension. In the theoretical layer of the dissertation, the available literature on the subject was analysed, as well as the systematics and delimitation of the definition of health and medical tourism based on a semantic analysis of terms frequently used interchangeably, such as: "health", "medical", "healing", "spa". The proposed method of defining and classifying health and medical tourism is a systematic, comprehensive response to the formulated allegations of ambiguity in the historical and semantic approach to these concepts in the literature on the subject. The formulated concept of the methodology of research on the impact of changes in medical tourism on changes in health tourism filled the cognitive gap in theoretical dimension.

The most important, original contribution to the science of economics is invented by author index of research on the impact of medical tourism on health tourism, formulated in the dissertation. The basis for determining its value were groups of economic data for which the calculation method was the sum of individual impact indicators calculated for the basic analysis period. The index is universal and can be used to build and test dependencies in other complex tourism products. The indicator enables the exploration of the structure in the perspective of the modular paradigm: descriptive, explanatory, relational and prognostic. The literature on the subject lacked a coherent, theoretical construct providing a basis for conducting in-depth research on the structure of health tourism and the processes taking place in it, which could constitute a utilitarian tool used by managers of health tourism enterprises and resorts.

In the application layer of the work, an analysis of the relationship between medical and health tourism was carried out, and an in-depth analysis of their structure can be used for permanent monitoring, diagnosis and forecasting within the studied sector. The reflections on the structure of health and medical tourism, formulated on the basis of the obtained results of empirical research, can be used in economic practice, including by entrepreneurs and local government, as recommendations and recommendations for business circles, as implications for the policy pursued at the central, regional and local levels. The summary of the dissertation presents practical guidelines for entities providing health tourism services and organizations managing health tourism destinations.

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