

Health Diplomacy and Health Tourism in Serbia



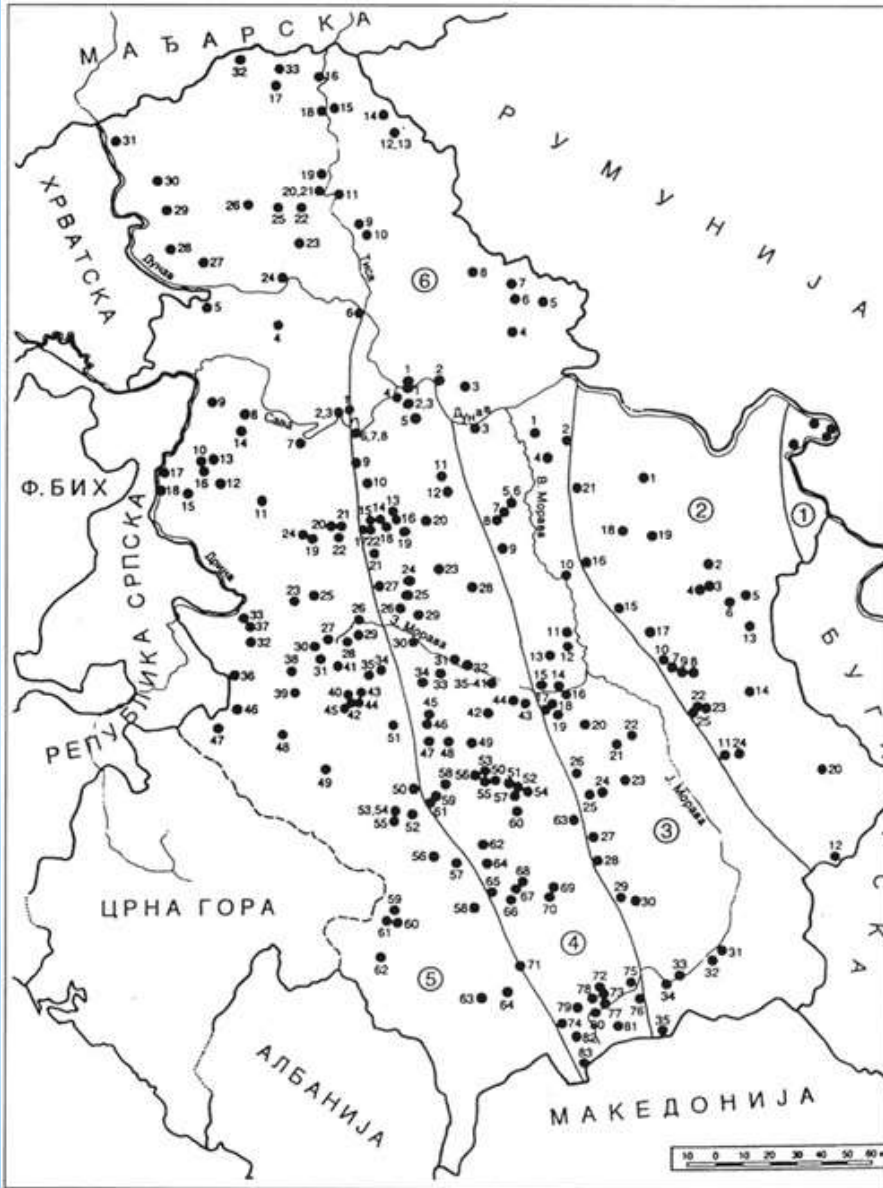
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Geothermal resources of Serbia



Serbia have more then 500 springs of mineral, thermal and thermal-mineral waters. This extraordinary fortune is located throughout whole country, but the most of them are in the Central Serbia. Our association has chemical analysis of every of this springs.

Serbian spas medical indications

1. Cardiovascular system (11)
2. Gastrointestinal system (3)
3. Gynecological (5)
4. Locomotive apparatus (19)
5. Metabolic system (3)
6. Neurological (21)
7. Respiratory System (4)
8. Rheumatological (23)
9. Skin (7)
10. Urinary tract (2)



Historical review (1)

- The use of mineral springs in Serbia has long history, back to the Illyrians. Later in history, the conquerors of the Serbian territory, the Romans and the Ottomans, also used these springs.
- Beginning of Serbian spa tourism is linked with a first summer house, that Prince Milos Obrenovic built in Bukovicka Spa in 1811. First formal analysis with confirmation of Serbian spa's healing factor came to Ribarska and Brestovacka Spa in 1834.
- The beginning of Serbian spa tourism is related with members of royal dynasties Obrenovic and Karadjordjevic. Maximum use of Serbian healing springs was the only thing two dynasties agree about. Construction of summer houses for courtiers was followed by the intensive construction of hotels and boarding houses, medical offices and additional contents. Domestic balneology appeared in the middle of the XIX century, based on the knowledge and experience of western balneologists.



Historical review (2)

- The “golden age” of the Serbian spas begins with the construction of first hotels at the end of the XIX century. From early XX century to World War II, Serbian spas record permanent rise in the number of beds and overnight stay. It can be said that spa tourism was the only form of organized tourism in Serbia, thus in former Yugoslavia until second half of the XX century.

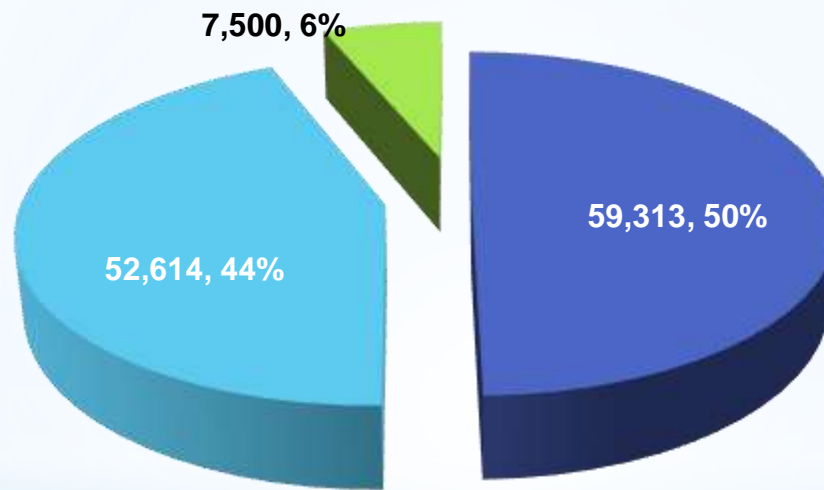


Historical review (3)

- After World War II, the new Government, in accordance with its ideas, want to provide a stay in spas to all members of the society. Because of demographic characteristics of users of spa services, that period is called “the union (syndicate) tourism”.
- As spas were places, where rich people went earlier, at that time spas were becoming the gathering place of the working class, and because of that, they lost all characteristics of fashionable place. Their characteristics became: social realistic architecture, huge number of patients, low consumption of tourists and unregistered (illegal) private accommodation facilities.
- In late 70’s the Pension Fund directs surplus funds to the construction of new health facilities, so this period can be considered as another prosperous for spas.
- However, from then to the 2002, there were few investments in spas (except medical equipment). That’s why spa’s medical centers have been more like hospitals then modern spa centers until 2002.

Health/spa tourism statistical data

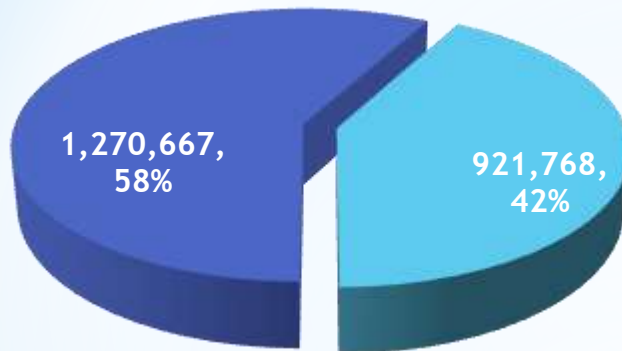
Total beds in Serbia - Structure



■ Other beds ■ Beds in spas ■ Beds in spas health inst

Health/spa tourism statistical data

Total arrivals in Serbia - 2013

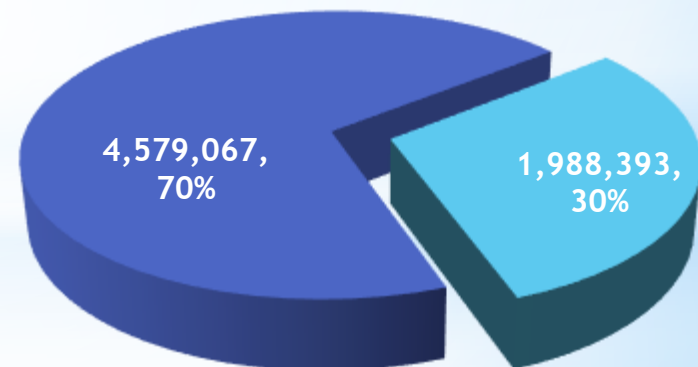


■ Domestic tourists ■ Abroad tourists

- The total number of tourist arrivals in 2013 was 2,192,435 (+ 5% compared to 2012), of which 1,270,667 were domestic (0%), and 921,768 (+ 14%) of foreign guests.
- The spas have stayed a total of 405,768 (+11%) guests, of which 350,337 (+ 8%) domestic, and 44,431 (+ 29%) of foreign guests.

- The total number of overnights was 6,567,460 (+1%) rates, of which 4,579,067 (-2%) domestic and 1,988,393 (+11%) of foreign overnight stays.
- Despite the reduced number of overnight stays of domestic tourists, this number still accounts for 70% of total realized overnights.

Total overnights in Serbia - 20013

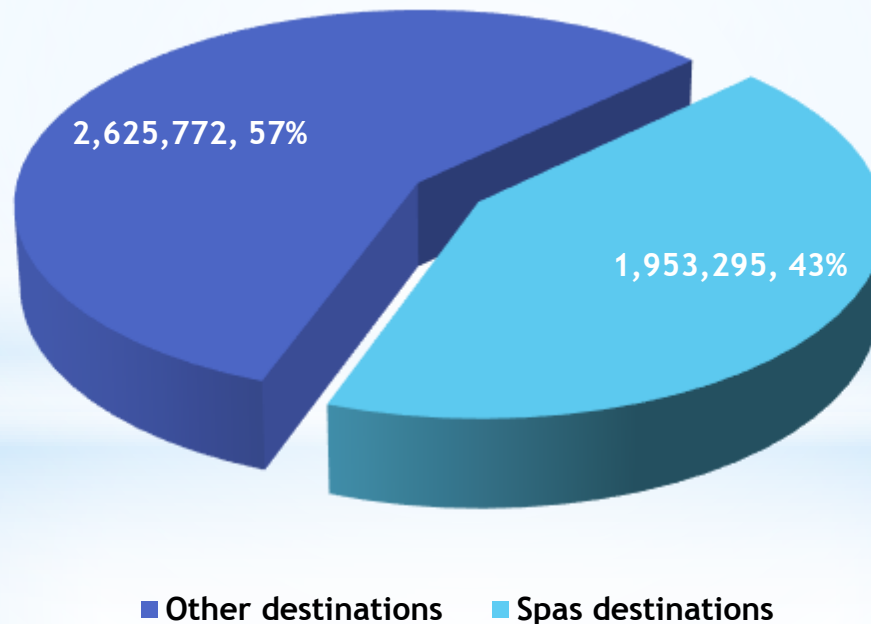


■ Domestic overnights ■ Abroad overnights

Health/spa tourism statistical data

- Domestic visitors made 1,953,295 (+3%) overnights, and foreign 181,202 (+26%).
- This means that domestic visitors to spas achieve 43% of total overnights in Serbia!
- Among the spas, the highest rates achieved Vrnjačka Spa (531,574), followed by Sokobanja (301,179), Koviljaca Spa (150,677) and Selters spa (145,879).

Domestic overnights - Structure



- From a total of **338** health institutions in Serbia, **29** are located in the spas.
- From a total of 126,132 employed in the health care Serbia, there are 5,096 at health institution in spas.
- The average salary in the spas is 55,060 RSD (about 465 €), which is 80 € more than the average salary in Serbia.
- The costs of state-funded rehabilitation in spas amount to **only 1.73% of the total allocation for the health protection of the Serbian population!**
- National health insurance spending on health care in 2013. was 272 € per capita (EU average was 1,900 €).
- Of earnings is allocated 10.30% for health insurance (5.15% pays employee, and 5.15% pays company).

State policy towards medical rehabilitation in spa resorts

- The network of health institutions in Serbia is organized on three levels: **primary** (health centers in the local government), **secondary** (hospitals, medical rehabilitation facilities in spas,...) and **tertiary** (clinic, polyclinics,).
- Health Insurance Fund of Serbia every year establish the "network plan" for rehabilitation. Network Plan covers medical indications and the number of beds (on a daily basis), which is funded by the Fund for each of the spa. The Fund has offices in the district centers throughout Serbia. Each of this local offices has a medical committee of three members.
 - After treatment at the hospital, each insured (with supporting documentation) visit the medical committee in their district, with a request to treatment (early or extended rehabilitation) teaching in one of the spa, which is indicated for his/her disease or injury.



State policy towards medical rehabilitation in spa resorts

Costs to settle the Fund are included:

- transportation to spa & vice versa,
- fully accommodation,
- fully therapy in spa.

Medical rehabilitation facilities in spas each year have to sign a contract with the Health Insurance Fund, which includes:

- the number of beds, and
- a single price that the Fund will pay for the service of rehabilitation.

State does not pay other expenses of these institutions - they themselves provide funds for the costs of employees' salaries, raw and medical supplies, fuel and the other costs.

As we said, these costs will be covered by revenue by selling services and capacity on the open market.

The concept of modern and authentic health tourism in Serbia

- It should be borne in mind that the interest of modern man for using natural healing factors significantly changed. Modern man lives longer, but all irregular. It remains to him less and less time to worry about himself, his appearance, mood, feelings, and many others, extremely personal moments, which, sooner or later, affecting the quality and duration of his life.
- Serbian wellness as a unique wellness concept is a set of complementary techniques which improve health and promote a healthy lifestyle with the use of elements based on the tradition and culture of the Serbian people.
- Serbian wellness is a science – based multidisciplinary program, that achieves good quality of life. At the same time, and health - the tourism product, as well as the element of rural tourism in Serbia.
- For the introduction of elements of the Serbian wellness offers health prevention programs, programs of healthy lifestyles, health tourism program and rural tourism, it is necessary to educate implementers of programs at different levels.
- Spa model is a completely new product that is suitable for most modern human populations. Rests on a very different applications of natural healing factors, mainly water, and others. Includes application and many other kinds of knowledge and skills that are used in order to achieve the maximum in the care of the body and the soul of modern man (wellness - wellbeing).

The concept of modern and indigenous health tourism in Serbia (2)

- Capacity for accommodation, entertainment and other needs of visitors must strictly comply with the prescribed standards, and staff must be well and adequately trained. Major role in the spa concept should have the medical staff, especially doctors of various specialties with sufficient knowledge of balneoclimatology.
- Plan and program quality improvement. For all partial tourist products on the destination of medical tourism should be, in our opinion, to have a larger number of informal education with topics at the center of policy on the quality of services. This is imperative for modern businesses in the tourism.
- Creating a system of quality standards and brand – related products and activities of medical tourism. This is a "conditio sine qua non" of the development of health tourism destination. Standardization and certification, i.e. the initial establishment, and then the maintenance and improvement should be a permanent job (Different categories of standards: standards of quality management - ISO 9001, an environmental protection system - ISO 14001, Health and Safety - 18001, in the domain of food preparation - ISO 22000 etc.). Building a brand is still in its infancy (this is due to a general lack of understanding of the term, and then the slow to overcome bottlenecks, especially with a product as an instrument of policy).

The concept of modern and indigenous health tourism in Serbia (3)

- Contemporary (new) spa can reconcile the interests of all. The quality of such places will depend on the ability of its management to a suitable natural surroundings, building quality facilities, use all available resources, creating an entirely new product needs of today's man, regardless of his age, sex, profession, religion, and even health. Modern spas must be good traffic associated with large emitting destinations, so you can do it easily reached, and its contents used not only residential premises, but the excursion. It must be in accommodation facilities of various categories, various sports - recreational facilities and numerous cultural - entertainment. Application of natural healing factors necessarily complement a variety of body care techniques, (a variety of massages, saunas, fitness programs) and the creation of environments for mental relaxation. Unlike traditional spa, new spa should be a place to gather all generations, especially the young and healthy, in that the same people come several times a year, which should not be boring, that must be quickly and continuously adjust to taste visitors, which will deal with prevention - most numerous and most important form of protection of human health, environmental quality and the extension of human life.
- Medical tourism in Serbia must obtain new facilities such as spa, wellness, fitness, and various different treatments and more. Also, the application of marketing must be dominant in the business and tourism policy (especially the concept of "4C"), and it is necessary to form an integrated tourism products, ie, a tourist destination for health tourism, which would be competitive on the international tourism market. In addition, networking interests through clustering and public - private partnerships can be a good way to innovation and competitiveness of the destination of medical tourism. Therefore, these lines turn would have to be relevant to the business, and tourism policy in relation to the development of health tourism destination Serbia.

Thank you for your attention!