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SPA TOURISM IN POLAND WITH PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON SPAS IN THE PROVINCE OF ŚWIĘTOKRZYSKIE (HOLLY CROSS)

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Spa tourism is a specific type of tourism as a result of health functions performed by the spa and the way of financing. In Poland, the stays are financed by various public entities: National Health Fund, Social Insurance Institution, Agricultural Social Insurance Fund, State Fund for the Rehabilitation of the Disabled. In the article are presented the conditions that must be met by municipalities wishing to obtain the status of spa resort and ways of financing health resort trips by some public entities. There are also briefly presented activities of spa resorts in the province of Świętokrzyskie.

Key words: spa tourism; spas; province świętokrzyskie.

Introduction

History of spas dates back to when man began to use the healing properties of minerals. The first mentions of the use of mineral resources in Poland come back from the chronicles from the 11th century. With the development of spa treatment in Poland also developed ways of its organization. People began to use discovered healing properties found in the spas of natural resources [9, p. 16–17]. The greatest importance for the development of the spa functions have mineral and thermal waters, therapeutic peat (mud), clay and healing properties of the climate [4, p. 175].

Spa tourism trips are associated with cure in sanatorium, rehabilitation and health care of spa related treatments provided on the basis of consultation of spa doctor [3, p. 19]. However, beyond the group of people whose health condition requires such traditional spa treatment is increasing demand for leisure as to improve the psycho-physical condition and disease prevention which involves modern civilization. Spas now, therefore, serve not only therapeutic treatments but also improve overall health [9, p. 249].

Spa tourism product is quite specific. The following features can be assigned to this product:

- consumption of the spa product is always a single act, even if somebody uses an identical product in the same place and time;
- a variety of spa product resulting from the fact that every provision of the service is unique for both the producer and the consumer;
- acquisition of spa product is often based on an idea of the place of temporary residence rather than on the product itself;
- product of spa tourism is only temporary;

- spa product can not be stored;
 - complementarity;
 - substitutability of spa product;
 - simultaneity act provision and consumption;
 - acquisition means the temporary right to use it in the particular place and time,
 - spa features are formed in direct contact between the provider and the customer
- [3, p. 44–45].

Spa treatment is a continuation of hospital treatment or outpatient treatment, whose aim is rehabilitation of a patient, treatment and prevention of chronic diseases using natural healing resources.

Conditioning activities of spas in Poland

Spas in Poland are based on the Act of 28th July 2005, on spa treatment, spas and spa protection areas and the municipalities spa. Spa healthcare in Poland is carried out using the following spa treatment facilities, such as:

- pump-room spa;
- graduation towers;
- parks;
- path movement;
- decorated sections of the sea coast;
- physiotherapy clinics;
- decorated underground mine workings [13].

Spa treatment plants are:

- spa hospitals;
- sanatorium spas;
- spa hospitals and sanatorium spas for children;
- spa clinics;
- physiotherapy clinics;
- hospitals and sanatoriums in the decorated underground mine workings [13].

Spa municipality and the municipality having the status of protected area of the spa performs its own tasks associated with maintaining the function of medicinal spas, in particular regarding:

- land management and the needs of spa treatment, protection of natural resources and raw medicinal materials, construction, or other activities prohibited in the zones of spa protection;
- protection of the natural conditions of the environment or the protected area of the spa, and meeting the requirements of acceptable standards of air pollution, noise, discharge of the sewage into the water or soil, waste management, emission of electromagnetic fields referred to in separate regulations;
- creating conditions for the operation of plant and equipment of spa treatment and the development of municipal infrastructure in order to meet the needs of the persons residing in the municipality for the spa treatment;
- creating and improvement of municipal and technical infrastructure intended for areas of spas and the spa protection related to the fulfillment of certain conditions (for

example, has the appropriate technical infrastructure in the field of water and wastewater, energy, in terms of public transport, leads waste management) [1, p. 62].

The reason why a large part of the municipalities in Poland are interested in obtaining the status of the spa is the ability to charge a fee which is the direct revenue of the budget of the municipality. It comes from anyone staying in town longer than a day. Moreover, the status of the spa is associated with an increase in interest of backpackers of the particular village, its recognition and brand value of the village [2, p. 222].

Spa status can be given to the area that meets the following conditions:

- it has deposits of natural medicinal raw materials of proven medicinal properties on the terms specified in the Act;
- its climate has medicinal properties confirmed and specified in the Act;
- on its territory there are spa treatment plants and device spa treatment, prepared to conduct spa treatment;
- adheres to the regulations on environmental protection requirements in relation to the environment;
- it has the technical infrastructure in the field of water and wastewater, energy, in terms of public transport, as well as is leading waste management [13].

In the area of spa or spa protection area there are separated three types of protection. They are marked with the following letters: «A», «B», and «C».

Zone «A», for which the percentage of green areas is not less than 65 %, comprises the area in which there are located spa treatment plants and the devices of spa treatment. There are also other facilities for treatment activities, tourist or patient care, in terms of the functioning of spa treatment in particular: guesthouses, restaurants and cafes.

Zone «B», for which the percentage of green areas is not less than 50 %, covers an area adjacent to the area «A», and representing its surroundings, which is designed for non-adverse effect for the healing properties of spa or protection spa area, and non-troublesome for patients – service and tourist facilities, including hotels, recreational sports utilities, housing and other related to meeting the needs persons residing in the area or covered by the boundaries of the national park or the nature reserve is a forest, sea or lake.

Zone «C», for which the percentage of lands biologically active is not less than 45 %, it covers an area adjacent to the zone «B», and constituting its surroundings and the area having an impact on the preservation of its landscape, climate and protecting the natural resources of medicinal raw materials [13].

Spas can be classified according to medicinal factors:

- health resorts;
- spas (healing waters);
- the spa mud.

While according to the classification taking into account the position above the sea level spas can be divided into:

- lowland – located in the area of an average altitude up to 300 m above the sea level;
- piedmont – located in the area of an average altitude from 300 m to 500 m above the sea level;
- mountainous – located in the area of an average altitude from 500 m to 700 m above the sea level;
- alpine – located in the area of an average altitude above 700 m above the sea level [6, p. 3].

Financing of spa stays by selected entities

Spa tourism in Poland is financed by the National Health Fund (NHF), Social Insurance Institution (SII), Agricultural Social Insurance Fund (ASIF), State Fund for the Rehabilitation of the Disabled (SFRD). Stay on the market spa tourism depends first of all from an affluence of the society, habits treatment and rest, an availability of treatment and tourist services and from fashion to meet the needs of this type [3, p. 32].

According to the Act of 27th August 2004, on health care services financed from public funds spa treatment or rehabilitation spa in Poland is entitled to a beneficiary on the basis of a referral issued from the doctor of health insurance.

In qualifying patient to plant spa treatment the doctor assesses:

- the state of health of the patient;
- the possibility of spa treatment using medicinal properties of natural raw materials;
- course of the disease which is an indication for spa treatment or rehabilitation spa;
- the effects of spa treatment or rehabilitation in the past;
- the patient's ability to self-service or self-movement or the patient's ability to self-service or self-navigation in a wheelchair [8].

Beneficiary bears the costs of travel to spa treatment or rehabilitation spa and the costs of return from the spa treatment or rehabilitation spa as well as partial payment for meals and accommodation in sanatorium spa. The entity obliged to health care from public funds covers to the amount specified in the contract of provincial department of the National Health Fund, from the sanatorium spa the difference of costs of boarding and lodging. Moreover, the National Health Fund, does not cover:

- the costs of staying of a caregiver;
- additional obliging at the site of the facility charges, for example climate charges;
- the charges of natural medicine treatments and rehabilitation not related to the basic disease which is a direct cause of referral for spa treatment [10, p. 64].

Children and young people under the age of 18, and if they are educated further to the age of 26, children with disabilities, to some extent without age limit as well as children entitled to survivor's pension do not assume payment for the cost of food and accommodation in the health resort hospital for children, sanatorium spa for children and sanatorium spa [12]. While caregivers will be charged fully for their stay.

Guaranteed benefits in Poland include:

- spa hospital treatment for children from 3 to 18 years old;
- spa sanatorium treatment for children from 7 to 18 years old;
- spa sanatorium treatment for children from 3 to 6 years old staying under an adult supervision;
- spa hospital treatment of adult;
- spa sanatorium treatment of adult;
- spa rehabilitation hospital for adults in the spa;
- spa rehabilitation for adults in sanatorium spa;
- spa outpatient treatment of adults and children [7].

Hospital stay lasts 21 days and is free of charge. Working person receives at this time a sick leave. The stay of a child lasts 27 days. The stay in a sanatorium spa lasts 21 days. A child is allowed to free stay while the stay of an employed person is partially payable.

An employed person takes this stay during his or her leave. The stay in the hospital for rehabilitation spa continues 28 days and is free of charge and takes place in the framework of a sick leave. The stay in a sanatorium spa for rehabilitation lasts 28 days and is partially payable and takes place in the framework of leave. Spa outpatient treatment of adults and children lasts from 6 to 18 days [10, p. 66].

Social Insurance Institution, since 1996, operates a medical rehabilitation within the framework of pension prevention. Rehabilitation conducted in the rehabilitation centers cooperating with the Social Insurance Institution is based on the assumption of a comprehensive impact procedures diagnostic, rehabilitation and psychological as well as widely conducted health education. The aim of the program is restoring the ability to work people who are at risk of long disease inability to work and at the same time have positive prognosis for recovery of this ability after rehabilitation. Rehabilitation program in the framework of pension prevention is addressed to insured people:

- threatened with total or partial inability to work;
- entitled to a sick leave or rehabilitation benefit after the cessation of entitlement to health insurance or accidental insurance;
- receiving periodic pension for incapacity to work at the same time promising to recover the ability to work after rehabilitation.

The basis for referral of the insured or pensioner to the rehabilitation center is a statement for rehabilitation issued by the doctor of the SII. The full cost of rehabilitation taking into account in particular the costs of treatment, accommodation and feeding covers the Social Insurance Institution (SII). The costs of travel to the rehabilitation center from the place of residence and return the SII, refunds to the amount of the ticket price of the cheapest means of the public transport.

Comprehensive medical rehabilitation includes fixed individually program aimed at treating diseases that caused the referral to rehabilitation and co-morbidities and includes in particular:

- various forms of physical rehabilitation, it means kinesiotherapy individual and collective, exercises in water and physiotherapy in the field of thermotherapy, cryotherapy, treatment by means of the electromagnetic field with high and low frequency, ultrasound treatment, laser therapy, classical and vibration massage,
- psychological rehabilitation including, among others psychoeducation and relaxation training,
- relaxation health aimed at providing information in the field of : learning the principles of proper nutrition, knowledge of risk factors for disease of civilization, basic knowledge about the disease process taking into account the profile of the disease, knowledge of risk factors for health in the workplace, basic information about the rights and obligations of an employer and an employee, the provision of instruction on the continuation of rehabilitation at home after a period of rehabilitation.

Therapeutic rehabilitation in a rehabilitation center should take 24 days while its duration can be extended or shortened by the senior consultant of the rehabilitation center after the prior consent of the Social Insurance Institution in case of:

- positive prognosis of regaining the ability to work after an extended period of rehabilitation,

- earlier restoration of the ability to work,
- the occurrence of the reasons attributing to the person directed to rehabilitation.

Another funder of spa services is the Agricultural Social Insurance Fund, which in accordance with its statutory duty provides benefits to farmers eligible for the benefit of rehabilitation. It is organized in the form of a 21-day tours conducted in their own Centers or Rehabilitation Centers of the ASIF, or rehabilitation plants with which the health insurance cooperates.

The main goal of rehabilitation conducted in the ASIF, is to prevent disability or limit it to a level allowing the insured to perform further work on a farm and in the case of people whose ability to work on the farm has already been lost – its restoration as far as possible as a result of treatment and rehabilitation. The rehabilitation can be used no more frequently than every 12 months.

Spa resorts in the province of Świętokrzyskie

Currently, Poland has 45 spa resorts mostly in the province of Lower Silesia. In the province of Świętokrzyskie there are two lowland spa resorts Busko-Zdrój and Solec-Zdrój.

Busko-Zdrój is located in the southern part of the province of Świętokrzyskie. The town has excellent ecological conditions because within a radius of 50 km there are no industrial zones. Busko-Zdrój is the urban-rural commune which is wealthy in unique in Europe mineral waters: specific sodium chloride, sulphide mineral water, iodized fluoride and ferric [9, p. 155].

They are anti-inflammatory, anthireumatic, detoxification and regeneration. They also lower cholesterol and blood sugar levels preventing atherosclerosis. Sulphurous waters otherwise known as sulfur-hydrogen sulfide is one of the very rare water treatment. Their healing properties put Busko in a row of unique spas in Europe. Sulphide water is used for bathing, drinking cures and mouthwash. On the other side, iodide-bromide waters contain particularly valuable for the body iodine and selenium. Iodide-bromide bathing is used in some cardiovascular diseases and autonomic nervous system. Selenium present in this type of water is essential for the maintenance of a healthy heart muscle and blood vessels. Using this natural therapeutic materials we can very effectively treat the disease organ motion, rheumatic as well as diseases of skin and circulatory system. This is the basic healing profile of the spa [11, p. 16].

Traditional hydrotherapy is supported with whole range of physical therapy and modern medical equipment, among other things, acquamassage, vacuumed, vibrating platform and cold treatment in chambers or in the cryogenic cabins in the temperature below minus 120 °C, giving good therapeutic effects. In addition to medical treatments, you can take advantage of beauty treatments and rejuvenating SPA type and Wellness restoring the harmony of body and spirit. In a wide range of spa are: youth capsule, massages, bathing, wraps with mud from the Dead Sea, shower tanning, relaxation treatments during music therapy in the salt-iodine cave [5, p. 9].

Busko-Zdrój spa has places in seven sanatorium locations and hospitals – “Marconi”, “Mikołaj”, “Willa Zielona”, “Krystyna”, “Oblęgorek”, “Oblęgorek II” and a Specialist Hospital Orthopaedic Rehabilitation “Górka”. All these facilities are accessible for people

with disabilities and offer full treatment facilities [11, p. 17].

Soles-Zdrój is a rural municipality, 20 km away from Busko-Zdrój. Northern areas of the municipality are within the Szaniecki Landscape Park. The municipality has rich resources of mineral waters: specific sodium chloride, sulphide and iodinated [9, p. 157].

Medicinal waters are derived from several wells to a depth of almost 170 m. They are so called brine sulphide containing sulfide ions and disulfide and moreover, chloride ions, bromide ions, iodide ions, borate ions and many other chemical elements such as calcium, magnesium, lithium, iron, strontium, selenium and manganese. These waters have salty taste and a specific odour of hydrogen sulfide. Sulphide water used in the treatment, in particular discovered a few years ago source “Malina”, having a concentration of sulfide ions 900 mg/l is the strongest in Poland, and the only one in Europe. In the spa we can effectively treat among other things, rheumatoid and osteoarthritis, ankylosing spondylitis, soft tissue rheumatism, post-traumatic conditions, discopathies, inflammation radiculitis, neuralgia, gout, skin diseases, respiratory diseases, diseases of circulatory system, heavy metal poisoning and osteoporosis [11, p. 28-29]. A new entity was set up in Solec. It is a hotel and a sanatorium “Raspberry Zdrój”, based on one of the strongest shots brine. It offers a wide range of rejuvenating, toning and beautifying treatments which include among others, bubble bath, youth capsule, massages, hydromassages, colour therapy, aromatherapy, therapy with algae and salt, treatments firming body and face, relax in the Finnish sauna, in the steam and herbal sauna [5, p. 9]. Basic treatments performed in the spa are sulphide and carbonic acid baths and wrapping in the mud. Spa uses a whole range of complementary treatments ranging from various types of massages to reaching up to the treatments using a magnetic field [11, p. 30]. Solec-Zdrój thanks to its picturesque location, favorable microclimate and the latest infrastructure spa is an ideal place for a successful course of treatment and perfect holiday.

Summary

To the most important tasks and activities connected with the development of health resorts not only in the province of Świętokrzyskie but also in the whole Poland, in the coming years we can include:

- supporting the development of infrastructure spa, tourism, recreation and sports infrastructure;
- creating a strong brand of Polish spa tourism;
- improving the quality of customer service;
- training for workers employed in spas and health resorts municipalities;
- developing and supporting promotional activities [1, p. 39].

Spa tourism is particularly important due to the fact that its services are effective, cheap, without side effects and non-invasive. Spa tourism services are the best form of prevention and health promotion. Interest in this type of services will increase due to the aging of population. Health of the elderly, however, is worse than the rest of the population, often among them there is a phenomenon of disability. Social and economic development causes an increase in the standard of living and it will contribute to this form of tourism. All this means that in the next years demand for spa tourism will continue to grow which undoubtedly contributes to its further development.

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СПА-ТУРИЗМ У ПОЛЬЩІ: СПА-ЦЕНТРИ СВЕНТОКШИСЬКОЇ ПРОВІНЦІЇ

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Спа-туризм є особливим видом туризму. Це обумовлено його оздоровчими функціями, що виконують в санаторіях, а також способом їх фінансування. У Польщі ця галузь розвивається завдяки фінансуванню численних громадських організацій: Національним фондом охорони здоров'я, соціальним страхуванням, Сільськогосподарським фондом соціального страхування, Державним фондом реабілітації інвалідів. На території країни є велика кількість курортів з багатими натуральними лікувальними умовами. Однак санаторії зіштовхуються з деякими обмеженнями у своїй діяльності. У статті зосереджено увагу на процесі регулювання оздоровчого (санаторного) туризму в Польщі. Описані умови, які повинні виконувати органи влади, котрі бажать отримати статус курорту, способи фінансування санаторно-курортних подорожей тощо. Також описано діяльність курортів Свентокшиського воєводства Республіки Польща.

Ключові слова: здоров'я; оздоровчий туризм; спа-туризм; санаторії; санаторний туризм; Свентокшиське воєводство.