

MEDICAL TOURISTS' EXPECTATIONS WHEN CHOOSING LITHUANIA FOR HEALTH CARE SERVICES

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Abstract

Purpose – Identify medical expectations of tourists choosing Lithuania as medical tourism country and to make comparative analysis with situation in Thailand. Medical tourism is one of the most promising fields of business in the world. International trade in medical services also has huge economic potential and gradually increasing outcome for the global economy (Bookman & Bookman, 2007). Major medical tourism destinations: Thailand, India, Singapore and Malaysia attracted more than 2.5 million medical travellers (United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, 2008). Lithuania is among the major emerging markets in medical tourism that is increasing every year. This study showed that main factors of attracting tourist to Lithuania: fast service and exceptional patient care, the high-tech medical equipment, good prices both for medical and travel services. Comparing to Thailand situation, Lithuania is attractive to the most medical tourist, because of the good quality services with affordable prices and location, while people choosing Thailand – mainly is affected by advertising. The main recommendation for attracting medical tourists to Lithuania is to initiate the advertising campaign to the targeted audiences.

Design/methodology/approach – The comparative analysis of scientific literature and empirical comparative quantitative research was executed for acquiring the expectations for medical tourists in Lithuania.

Findings – Overview of health and medical tourism situation in Lithuania and other emerging markets. This study showed that main factors of attracting tourist to Lithuania: fast service and exceptional patient care, the high-tech medical equipment, good prices both for medical and travel services and other. Comparative empirical analysis of medical tourist expectations in Lithuania and Thailand. Comparing to Thailand situation, Lithuania is attractive to the most medical tourist, because of the good quality services with affordable prices and location, while people choosing Thailand – mainly is affected by advertising. The main

recommendation for attracting medical tourists to Lithuania is to initiate the advertising campaign to the targeted audiences.

Research limitations/implications –research is based rather small samples (Lithuania n=112, Thailand n=104) and on non-probability sampling techniques, which do not allow making generalizations (i.e., statistical inferences) from the sample to the population being studied. Therefore, it means that is adopted a pragmatic approach in research and can be resolved in further studies.

Practical implications – Identified the medical tourists’ expectations choosing Lithuania as medical tourism destination in order to build communication campaign to the target audiences of medical tourist in Lithuania

Originality/Value – Medical tourism is rather new topic in social research. There are few scientific papers focusing on medical tourism and their findings are rather fragmented. The great importance to investigate medical tourist expectation in Lithuania has raised because of increased demand of health services for tourist in the country and new image formation of Lithuania in the world.

Keywords: medical tourism, medical tourist expectations, customer decision factors, health services.

Research type: research paper.

Introduction

Medical tourism is considered one of the world's fastest developing specialized types of tourism, an important both economically and socially. (Bookman & Bookman, 2007) Medical tourism development is strongly influenced by globalization, which is recently increasingly accelerating. Travelling became easier and much quicker than in XXth century. The other factors of of medical tourism development are growing costs of health care services and long waiting queues for different operations. Therefore, opportunity to get health care services abroad can save time and money for customers and extending the horizons for travelling.

Medical tourism – is the part of health tourism, which combines health services and leisure tourism. Major destinations of medical tourism are Thailand, India, Singapore. The most popular health services for medical tourists: dentistry, aesthetic surgery, eye surgery, cardiovascular operations. Lithuania is a young and promising market for medical tourism, which has good medical rehabilitation infrastructure and good health care professionals, but it’s not enough to meet all needs of medical tourists. People are looking for cheaper and quality health services in a foreign country, which might add to Lithuania additional bonuses. Lithuania's increasingly gained a reputation as an excellent medical tourism country, people for the low price will receive high-quality service and whether it will be done quickly, what kind of travel options and additional services.

Problem: What are the main factors influencing the medical needs of tourists choosing Lithuania as travel destination and how it should be efficiency developed in order to attract more new customers to Lithuania?

Purpose: Identify medical tourists’ expectations choosing Lithuania as medical tourism destination in comparison with Thailand situation.

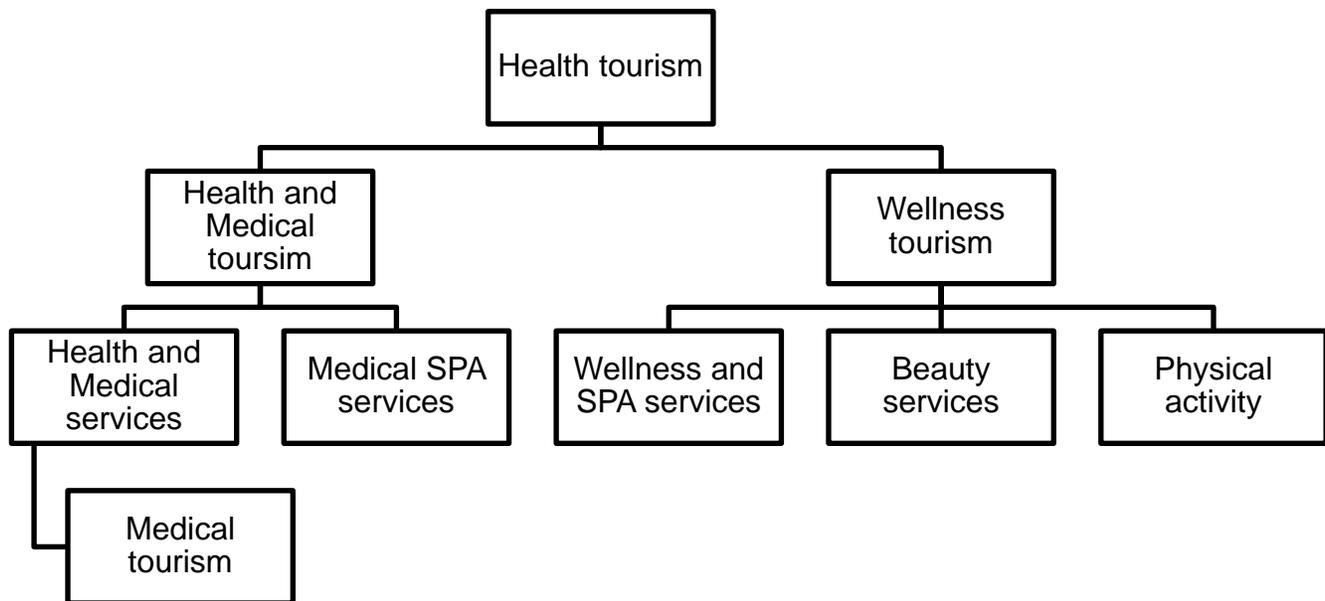
Tasks:

1. Review the theoretical health and medical tourism definitions.
2. Conduct foreign and Lithuanian medical tourism analysis.
3. Identify the main factors that have influenced people to choose Lithuania as a medical tourism destination.
4. Perform comparative analysis of Lithuania and Thailand situation in order to improve the medical tourism sector in Lithuania.

1. Definition of medical tourism

Many authors define the differently the medical tourism. According to scientists, medical tourism includes all categories of medical services that help people improve their health by traveling to another country. In other words, medical tourism falls to health tourism group.

Vaitkevičiūtė V. (2001), defines health tourism as "the type of tourism, when people traveling to another country for the different purposes of testing, saving, restoring or enhancing the health by obtaining health and wellness services, while using and other tourist services. (Vaitkevičiūtė, 2001). Health tourism is a very broad concept of linking health and tourism together. (Bavejan, 2012). Health tourism can be divided into two key areas: health and wellness tourism (see Figure 1 below).



Source: Bavejan, 2012

Figure 1. Health tourism Classification

Medical tourism is attributed to health services. This means that a person has certain health problems, which would be cured. In this case, man needs more complex services such as surgery, dental services, plastic surgery and the like. Health tourism means that people desire to protect themselves from possible health risks and improve well-being by using services such as spa or beauty treatments and so on. (Bavèjan, 2012).

Health tourism - is traveling with the aim of improving the health, wellness and receiving (or) health services. And medical tourism - is traveling for the purpose of obtaining medical services (medical, dental or plastic surgery) (Paulauskienė, 2012).

1.1. Medical tourism in the world

Currently, more than 50 countries world-wide have announced medical tourism as strategic priority for development. Deloitte (2014) study showed that a global medical tourism turnover in 2004 amounted to over \$40 billion, 2010- \$79 billion, 2012- \$100 billion and is constantly growing. US residents have been granted medical services in foreign countries, and over 1 million patients took advantage of it. It is planned that the number of foreign surgery until 2017 will increase to 15 million. (Almanaitė, 2011)

Other countries, patients often move to another country to seek treatment in the following areas:

- Dental services;
- Plastic and aesthetic surgery;
- Eye surgery;
- Heart and vascular surgery;
- Health surveys and other diagnostics tests.

Deloitte (2014) study showed that one of the biggest reasons for choosing a foreign country for health services is cost. See price comparison table below.

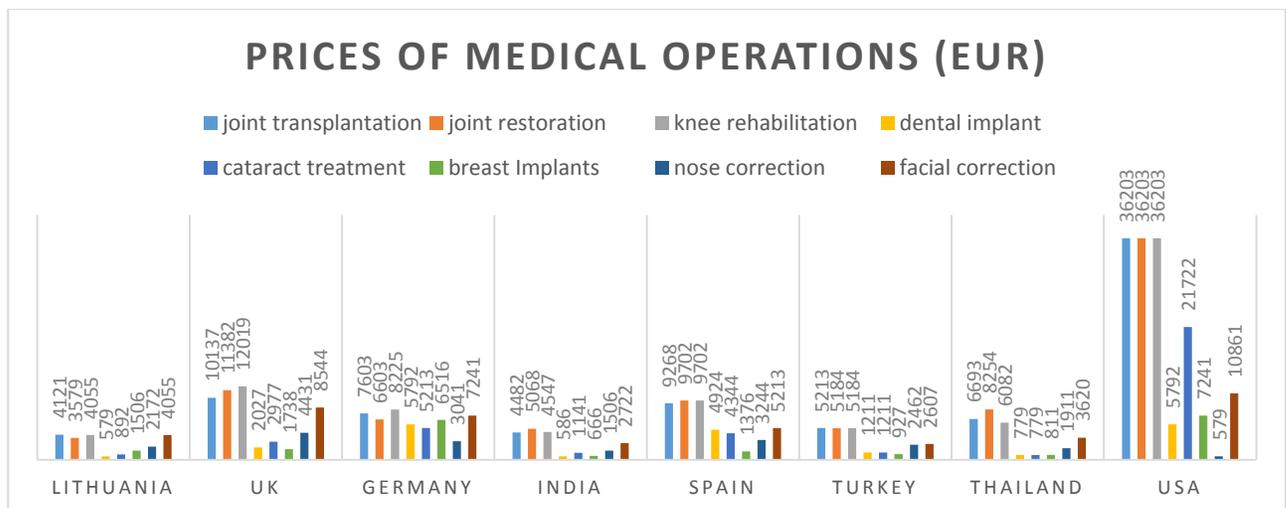


Figure 2. Medical services price comparison in the world. Source: Deloitte (2014).

Medical tourists, choosing the country for health services takes consideration not only prices and quality of necessary treatment, but also take advantage of other services offered by the country, ie, leisure and other cultural entertainment services. This is very useful not only for medical centres, but also for tourism businesses in the country.

Also the trend of the flow of patients from poorer countries with less-developed health services level can be observed. People usually prefer to have treatment abroad, if they suspect that cancer or other cardiovascular diseases can be explored better abroad. Thus, there is a desire to clarify the diagnosis, using the newest equipment and technology with the lead of competent medical professionals. In this respect, leading medical sciences are oncology, orthopaedics and neurology.

Finally, a large medical tourist flow is observed in several directions, usually in relation to the rehabilitation resorts, dental and plastic surgery industries, and tourism in general. This is already a well-established practice of combining relaxation with access to health care services. And this is a lucrative business, but requires regular updates and promising a constant competition with new entrants.

At present, the world's leading medical tourism countries are in Asia (Thailand, India, Malaysia and Singapore) Europe (Malta, Hungary, Poland, Belgija), South America (Brazil, Cuba, Costa Rica). However, price is not always the main criteria for why some patients prefer to treat their country, the Danes mentioned a well-developed infrastructure of medical institutions, convenient and cheap staying in hotels, holiday, traveling, etc., The widest possible choice of medical services, convenient geographical location and so on.

1.2. Lithuania in the context of Eastern Europe medical tourism countries

Ernst & Young (2012) conducted a study to assess the competitiveness of Lithuania's in comparison with Latvia, Estonia, the Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary. The main comparative factors - geographical, economic, tourist aspects.

The study has showed that neighbouring countries Estonia and Latvia have very similar medical tourism situation like Lithuania. Most patients received in Eastern European countries were due to a favourable geographic location, low prices and low language barriers. Latvia is doing slightly behind Estonia, which can offer a wider range of services and greater possibilities to travel. This is due to the fact that Latvia has joined medical tourism countries just recently. In comparison, Estonia receives patients from the Scandinavian countries due to the convenient transportation by the plane or ferry. However, these two countries have less attraction and medical tourism is not so developed yet. One of the reasons might be health insurance system, because more attention is paid to private individuals, who pay from their private funds.

The Czech Republic is very strong health care and medical tourism services. This country can boast not only spectacular nature, and a well-developed resort towns. Czech Republic strongly supports their cities, and invests a lot of money that way to attract more customers. This country is very popular among Germans, who has majority of

medical tourists in the country. This is a great neighbour, offering high quality services at a low cost. Czech Republic pays great attention to marketing. Invest in websites, their improvement, and convenient information access residents in other countries.

Poland is very popular for dental and surgical services. This country uses mostly by Germans, Scandinavians, and British. Medical tourism favours in convenient transport links, low price and good quality. Poland devotes considerable attention to marketing, developing web sites, developing collaborative relationships with intermediaries who find clients from abroad.

Hungary is very popular in US patients is simplified because obtaining a visa and other paperwork in order to get treatment in this country. This country is famous for its high level of dental services, as well as plastic surgery. Here come a lot of medical tourists because of the good price and high quality. Hungary has long been developing medical tourism and pays a lot of attention. Invest in marketing, which pages with all comfortable and informative information, looking for partners in other countries, would help attract more customers.

Comparing all these countries, they have very similar background because of cultural and social mentality, language proficiency, and price and quality level. One of the major differences in attracting medical tourists is the geographical position of the countries, and existing connections. Hungary can boast bearing medical visa, which greatly facilitates the medical tourist attraction, as well as well-developed marketing area; the other cannot boast the benchmark countries, including Lithuania.

Describing situation in Lithuania, researches named the country as the fastest growing medical tourism destination in the Baltic States and all Nordic region. (Ernst & Young, 2012). Feasibility Study and Recommendations for Medical Tourism Development and Promotion of Medical Services Export in Lithuania (2012) have previewed that Lithuania could attract about 292,000 medical tourists and earn over 284 million dollars in 2022 and grow by 15 percent annually. It is previewed also, that private health-care companies will earn 20-30 percent of income from medical tourism. So, globally Lithuanian is among the world famous tourist destinations for medical tourism or tourists at least heard about it. Nevertheless, describing current situation in Lithuania named as average. Medical tourists (local and foreign) amount 10 percent of all the tourists in Lithuania who spend approximately 100 euro per day. (Balnienė, 2013)

From Table 1 we can conclude that the stereotype exists in our country for the service quality level, many foreigners believe that quality really low. This is very bad for the country's medical tourism image and demands the elimination of these stereotypes. Therefore, Lithuania should promote its health care services abroad. The most effective channel is recommendations through reputable tourism managers or agents who facilitate the choice of potential medical tourists. Medical service providers includes brokers. Private medical institutions often work together with intermediaries who organize medical tourist traffic and thus help to identify patients from abroad.

Lithuanian medical tourism services provided by public and private health care institutions. Services for medical tourists can be offered two public hospitals Lithuania – Kaunas Clinics and Vilnius University Hospital. These institutions have a wide range of

services (cardiac surgery, neurosurgery, etc.), good professionals, and have some for the latest technology. More services can be offered the private sector agencies, and many of these institutions have potential. This is due to the fact that private clinics usually have the latest technology and quality of service very high.

Table 1 SWOT analysis of medical tourism in Lithuania

Strengths	Weaknesses
European level safe and quality health care services; Highly-skilled professionals English-speaking medical staff Personal attention and high level of services; Modern technologies and treatment methods; Absence of waiting lists; Quick health check-ups and disease diagnostics. Possibilities to match medical services with relaxation and recreation.	Not a popular destination; Limited number medical staff (emigration) Nor much research made; Competition with other forms of tourism; No cooperation with neighbouring countries Geographic location; Lack of low cost flights to other destinations other than UK Lack of marketing strategy (national wide) Lack of the image of the good quality services Lack of public private partnership Lack of information and data Seasonality
OPPORTUNITIES	TREATS
Change image of Lithuanian medical tourism	The development of tourism in the neighbour countries

Source: created by authors.

Today, the most popular private institutions offering a range of services and foreign patients are the following:

- UAB „SK Impeks Medicinos diagnostikos centras”
- UAB „Baltijos ir Amerikos terapijos ir chirurgijos klinika“
- UAB „Northway medicinos centrai”
- UAB „Vilniaus širdies chirurgijos centras (Kardiolita)”
- UAB „Grožio terapijos ir chirurgijos klinika“
- UAB „Plastinės chirurgijos centras“
- UAB „Denticija“

Currently, the only clinic Vilnius Cardiac Surgery Center (Kardiolita) in Vilnius has internationally recognized JCI accreditation certificate (acquired in 2013), which shows that the medical establishment, management, equipment and services in line with international standard. The fact that it is only clinic in the Baltic countries with has such a certificate. This shows that Lithuania leads one step further in medical tourism than other Baltic countries.

The most popular medical services used by foreign patients in Lithuania areplastic and aesthetic surgery; dental services; eye surgery; heart surgery and organ transplantation services; health tests and other diagnostic tests. "Lithuania has

sufficiently well-developed infrastructure of health care institutions, medical institutions equipped with modern medical equipment, introducing the latest methods of treatment, the doctors and nurses are constantly improving qualifications of Lithuania and other European countries. More than 30 Lithuanian health care facilities are certified according to the ISO standard. Lithuanian health care supply and shape the international medical tourism market demand. And currently doing market research, we identify potential markets, demand for services, "- says Laimutis Paškevičius (2012). However, according to Ernst & Young in 2012 research, Lithuania is far from European Union countries in the medical sector infrastructure data, especially for the private beds see Table 2.

Table 2. Medical infrastructure sector in 2012.

Indicator	Lithuania	EU
Number of hospitals per 100,000 population	4,89	2,97
Active treatment beds per 10,000 population	50,3	39,5
Hospital hospitalized active treatment per 100 population	21,5	17
The number of beds in private hospitals (% of total number of beds)	0,46	36,18

Source: authors own calculations based on: Ernst & Young, Lithuanian medical tourism development and promotion of medical services export opportunities for analysis and recommendations, 2012.

According to the World Health Organization, which publishes data on Lithuania and the remaining European Union countries, the medical sector human resources in 2012, are presented in Table 3 show that Lithuania has more doctors and dentists per capita than the EU average:

Table 3 Human resources in medical services 2012.

Indicator	Lithuania	EU
Practicing physicians per 100 000 inhabitants	366,2	323,72
Practicing dentists per 100 000 population	70,5	62,62
Practicing nurses per 100 000 population	726,2	775,24

Source: authors own calculations based on: Ernst & Young, Lithuanian medical tourism development and promotion of medical services export opportunities for analysis and recommendations, 2012.

According to data above it is suggested that Lithuania is able to generate large flows of medical tourists or even over-capacity in terms of hospital beds, doctors and medical students. In principle, the excess can be used for medical tourism as a sufficient number of specialists in order to develop this type of tourism, and for example, the bed can be used efficiently and is suitable for both the infrastructure and the quality of service.

Promoting health tourism development and to increase inbound tourist flows from third countries, set up in May 2013 and successfully operates Lithuanian medical tourism cluster - the Association of the most advanced hospitals, clinics and other health care providers, hotels, tour operators and public authorities operating together to encourage the provision of services exports. One of the medical tourism cluster objectives are: to improve the country's competitiveness and uniqueness of the international medical tourism market. Lithuanian tourism development in the 2014-2020 program requirements that the health (medical) tourism - one of the priorities and the means to develop. Of course, the state plays a very large role, because of the political attention and financial investment over the whole infrastructure. Convenient cross-border traffic, road upgrades, many institutional cooperation, promotion of medical institutions, in order to help get international accreditations and so on.

2. The medical tourist types and medical service selection factors

"Medical tourists" are persons who travel to another country in order to test, restore or enhance health and wellness and obtain other tourist services. Medical tourists should not be treated as residents of other countries who have a permanent residence permit in Lithuania (Paškevičius, 2012). However, the medical tourists can be divided in two different groups depending on the form of health treating and how it is funded:

First group is the global medical tourists who can be treated as ordinary consumers, because they purchase goods / services, and these services are for medical treatment. Here, however, important question is insurance availability internationally. (Thomas, 2014).

Second group: medical tourists from Europe. According the EU law, all EU citizens have rights to receive the same medical assistance and to compensate the cost of treatment in all EU Member States, (European Commission, 2010).

By defining these groups the differences can be seen between European medical tourists and Asian-American tourists who are treated more as consumers, and non-residents. However, this is only one side of the coin, which focus on the costs. In other studies, it has been observed that not infrequently medical tourists regardless of whether it is paying from their own pockets, or it pays for the state or the insurance company money / money was a secondary concern.

Many authors tried to define the main factors of choosing medical services in another country. Among them: price; latest technology of medical equipment, no waiting lines, ability to travel; convenience, confidentiality. Figure 3 shows the model, which reflects the theoretical medical tourist's choice.

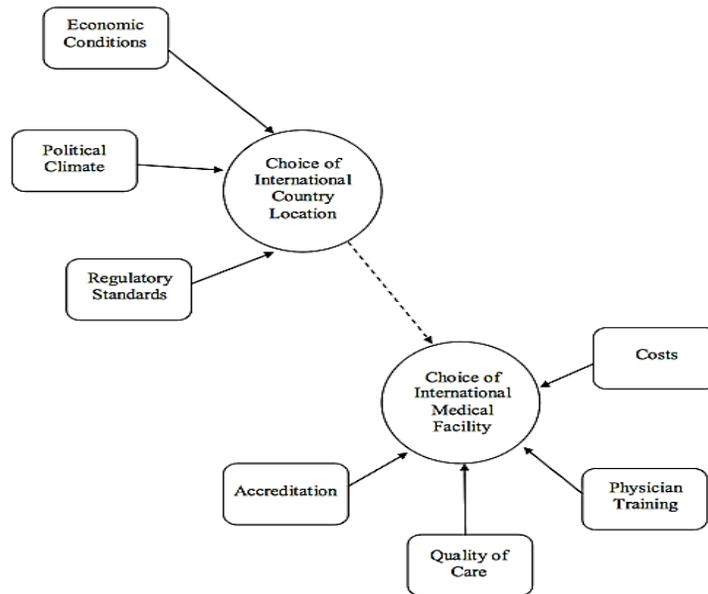
According to the model, the two level factors can be named. The first is concerning the country, the other – the medical provider. The authors point out the criteria under which a person chooses the country:

1. Economic situation: Medical tourism is a lucrative business that engages in any of the other party. And those that have stable or growing economic situation has an

advantage over other countries including choosing medical tourists.

2. The political climate: Security is important for all medical tourists. In previous research, it was discovered that medical tourists prefer areas with more quiet and stable political environment. Thus, terrorism or the threat of political uprisings damaging medical tourism sector in the country..

3. Regulatory Standards: Countries such as the United States in search of international medical patients are always interested in foreign country's legal environment. Health Insurance and Accountability Act, which was signed in 1996. in order to protect patient health information use and disclosure in order to protect patients.



Source: Based on C. Smith and A. Forgione *Global Outsourcing of Healthcare: A Medical Tourism Decision Model*, 2008, 22 p.

Figure 3. Selection criteria for choosing a medical tourist in the country.

The main factors influencing choosing medical facility in foreign country:

1. Price: Great medical service price difference between different countries is one of the main things why medical tourism market is expanding rapidly. According to previous studies, it was found that price is the main factor why US residents chose treatment abroad. (Smith and Forgione, 2008).

2. Accreditation standards are an important factor influencing the quality of care and the provision of foreign patients. Medical tourists always expect the hospital to provide them with excellent quality, international standards of health care. One of the main and most famous is the JCI accreditation standards for accreditation.

3. The quality of services. Foreign countries provide medical services and its

quality is also very important factor influencing the choice of patients. According to earlier studies it was observed that medical tourists before choosing a country viewed the treatment of endemic diseases such as HIV, malaria, hepatitis, tuberculosis and others. with which they may encounter during their visit. So the countries that can boast without endemic disease outbreaks medical history in the eyes of the tourist gets bonuses..

4. Professional qualification: Certified and experienced doctors who speak several languages are highly valued. English and / or Russian-speaking certified physician can more detail and tell the patient about the disease, the treatment.

3. Empirical research

In this paper the empirical research was made concluding quantitative method (survey) and statistical analysis with statistical package SPSS 19.0. The aim of survey- to analyse the main factors of choosing Lithuania for medical services in. The comparative analysis with Thailand was chosen in order to objectively evaluate the data obtained from empirical study in Lithuania. Thailand currently is the most popular destination among medical tourists, it is believed that a comparative analysis will help to effectively evaluate and draw conclusions with proposals. Thailand quantitative research (n=104) was made by Kristine Mae F. Ricafort of School of Business and Technology of Webster University in 2011. Lithuanian study (n=112), made by authors, using the same questionnaire of Thailand survey, transmitted via www.surveymonkey.com web services and through several travel agencies in Lithuania engaged in international medical tourism business.

Table 4. Distribution of respondents by country of residence in Lithuania and Thailand

Country of residence	Lithuania	Thailand
East Asia	3	37
Europe	86	35
America	13	3
South Asia	2	16
Oceania	2	3
Middle East	5	10
Africa	1	0
Total	112	104

Frequency of usage. The survey showed that even 60.7% respondents visit Lithuania for the first time, the other- 39.3% for the 2nd and more. Very similar situation was described in Thai survey. The first visit in Thailand had 59.6% respondents, while the remaining 40.4% is visiting repeatedly.

Factors influencing choice. Analysing the data revealed that medical treatment for tourists traveling to Lithuania is the most important fast service and exceptional patient care ($x_0 = 4.21$ in Lithuania, $x_0 = 4.54$ in Thailand), whereas patients with the most important people choosing treatment in Thailand were professional and certified doctors ($x_0 = 4, 69$). Also was mentioned the latest technology ($x_0 = 4,20$) in Lithuania among the main factors choosing this destination.

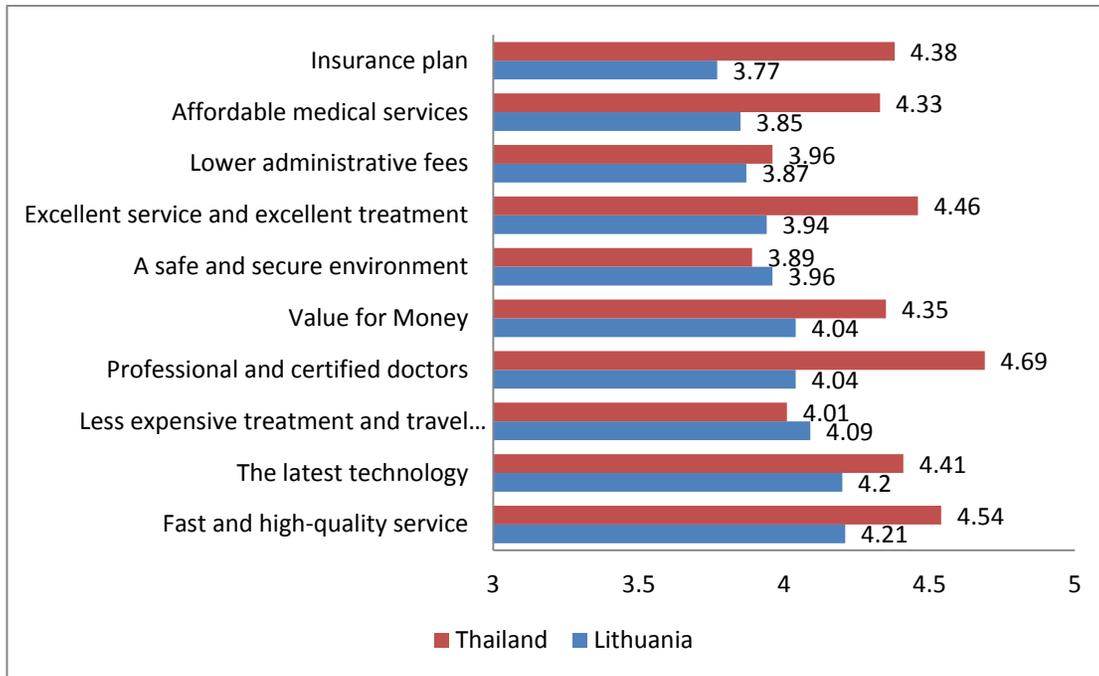


Figure 4. Factors of choosing Lithuania and Thailand for medical tourism

3.1. Hypothesis testing

In order to study in more detail the information received from the survey, several hypotheses was formed and tested using the statistical analysis tools, mostly ANOVA dispersion analysis.

H1: Demographic aspects such as respondents' gender and age have influence the choice of the country for medical tourism purposes.

The statistical analysis has showed that gender and age have a strong impact on opinion of respondents such aspects as: professional and certified doctors (p -level = 0.012), Special offers trips at the end of treatment ($p = 0.022$ -level) and affordable travel after treatment (p -level = 0.05). In these cases, the first hypothesis is accepted. Looking at data from studies conducted in Thailand, we see that gender has a strong impact on hospitals that offer special promotions for hotel accommodation (p -level = 0.047). In this case, the first hypothesis is accepted.

H2: Demographic aspects such as respondents' place of residence, income and frequency of visits to the country for medical purposes has little or no influence on the choice of the country for medical tourism purposes.

We see that the choice of Lithuania medical tourism country strong links between the place of residence of the respondents and factors. Therefore, the second hypothesis is accepted. However, a review of Thai survey shows that there is a strong relationship prevails tap respondents' place of residence and the international hospital accreditation (p-level = 0.047), hospitals that offer special prices for traveling after the end of treatment (p-level = 0.048), and the hospital ease of contact by public transport (p-level = 0.001). Relationship between income respondents and hospitals are located in a secure and protected areas (p-level = 0.049) was observed in Lithuania survey.. When choosing Thailand, we see a strong relationship between income and hospital respondents that have easy access to public transport (p-level = 0.024). Both Lithuania and Thailand cases hypothesis H2 was accepted.

By summarising the results of surveys in Lithuania and Thailand, comparison analysis showed in the table below:

Table 6. Comparative analysis of choosing Lithuania and Thailand for medical tourism

Lithuania	Thailand
<p><i>Medical tourist profile:</i> All ages, but most young people (25-34 years old), both men and women, frequently from Europe and US; mostly specialist with average income 2,000 to 4,000 US dollars per month.</p> <p><i>Medical tourism purposes:</i> More than half of the medical tourists who come for the first time for areplastic and aesthetic surgery; dental services; eye surgery; heart surgery and organ transplantation services; health tests and other diagnostic tests.</p> <p><i>Main factors traveling to Lithuania:</i> the prompt and exceptional service, the latest technology, the price-quality ratio, lower cost of treatment, in other words the most important - product, price. Choice is influenced by demographic factors such as gender, income, age and frequency of visit.</p>	<p><i>Thailand tourist's profile:</i> generally older adults (35 to 65 and older), women and men, from Asia, Europe, the Middle East, professionals, managers, retired people , from 2,000 US up 10,000 US. dollars. and going to Thailand for the first time.</p> <p><i>Medical tourism purposes:</i> More than half of the medical tourists who come for the 2-3 time for mostly organ transplant procedures, dental services, cardiac surgery, orthopaedic medical services.</p> <p><i>Main factors going to Thailand :</i> hopes of getting a quality product (important: international accreditation, professional doctors, fast and quality service, etc.), And only then expect a better price. Selection factors are influenced by demographics.</p>

Conclusions

Following the theoretic and empirical analysis such conclusions can be made:

1) Medical tourism is one of the branches of health tourism with purpose to travel in order to obtain medical services (medical, dental or plastic surgery) along with the other tourism services.

2) Medical tourism became priority industry in many developing countries very recently. This area intensively developing and providing substantial financial resources for economic growth. The most popular medical tourism countries are Thailand, India and Singapore and other Asian countries, and noted that medical tourists to other countries generally going to use dental, plastic and aesthetic surgery, eye surgery and cardiac and vascular surgery medical services.

3) Analysing the situation of Lithuania in the context of Eastern Europe and Scandinavian countries, the situation is better than is thought. Lithuania called among the most attractive growing destinations for medical tourist in this area, because of a lower price, high quality and qualified personnel. Every year, there is growing number of tourists from all over the world. Already the forecasts predict 15 percent of annual growth of medical tourist flows to Lithuania in the coming years.

4) The empirical analysis of data from the quantitative survey identified the factors influencing choices for medical tourists Lithuania medical tourism country: 1) fast service and exceptional patient care, 2) the high-tech medical equipment 3) less expensive treatment and opportunity to travel cheaply 4-5) corresponding to the service price and quality ratio 4-5) professional and certified doctors and staff. It was observed that medical tourists gathered for Lithuania medical tourism country focuses on the same product, in this case the quality of services and the period of time required to perform them, and only then the price and location - have the least impact on advertising. Hypotheses, how demographics: gender, age, place of residence, income, frequency of usage affect the choice of factors for choosing destination, was accepted, i.e. the demographics have strong influence on medical tourism destination and it can be used for future segmentation and attraction of potential tourists in Lithuania.

5) A comparative analysis between Lithuania and Thai medical tourists has showed that the choice of the country, in both cases, was done mainly relying on the quality of service and competence of personnel, but in case in Lithuania medical tourists also taking account the prices and location, while people choosing Thailand – mainly is affected by advertising. Demographic factors has no or very little influence on the choice of factors when choosing a Thailand medical tourism country.

6) Although Lithuania has already providing high quality medical services, but most hospitals are not suited to large flows of medical tourists, which adds rows and prolong people's time spent in queues need to improve infrastructure, increase the number of places for foreign patients. As well as to promote the preparation of hospitals to receive JCI accreditation, which is currently in Lithuania and the Baltic region only 1 hospital can boast of having this accreditation. The advertising for targeted audiences

would help to reach awareness between potential clients and would help to attract medical tourists to Lithuania.

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