



UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS-VARNA
Department "Economics and organization of Tourism"

MARKETING OF A TOURIST DESTINATION
HEALTH TOURISM BY EXAMPLE
THE MUNICIPALITY OF VARNA

A U T O R E F E R A T

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I. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THESIS WORK

1. Relevance and importance of the problem

The development of modern tourism is a wide field of research. It is a sensitive system that resonates with all social and economic changes in the world.

In our preliminary study, we found that the development of tourism in recent decades is predetermined by a number of factors. Among them, the processes of globalization, the high rates of technical and economic development, the increased standard of living of the population of the tourist-generating countries, as well as the derived factors, are recognized as paramount.; the new understanding of the quality of life, the increased free time, the increased urban population, the modernized transport and last but not least the increased competition to attract customers at international and national level. At the same time, there is also a tendency to satisfy the tourist demand. This necessitates the introduction of new tourist activities and services with high and sustainable quality, new standards and uniqueness. The dynamics in the development of the tourism industry require new and permanent adaptability, relevant innovations and investments. In this aspect, health tourism has a significant potential for development of the Bulgarian tourism industry.

2. Research thesis

The thesis argues that the **marketing of the destination for health tourism is a function of the common coordinated, planned and organized actions of all stakeholders in the field in the realization of tourist trips with health needs and motives.**

To validate the formulated thesis, the following hypotheses are put forward:

H 1. There are great opportunities for development of health, SPA and wellness tourism in Varna municipality.

H 2. Stakeholders work coordinated and planned for marketing of Varna municipality as a destination for health tourism.

H 3. Varna municipality has an established image as a destination for health tourism (according to stakeholders).

H 4. The marketing mix of Varna municipality meets the requirements of the modern consumer segment for health tourism.

H 5. Varna municipality is an attractive destination for health tourism on the International and domestic tourist market.

3. Subject and object of study

The subject of research in the dissertation is the municipality of Varna as a tourist destination for health tourism, interpreted in the context of the concept of development of a tourist destination based on the marketing approach.

The subject of the study is the marketing activity of Varna municipality as a tourist destination for health tourism.

4. Research objective and objectives

The objective of the thesis is, on the basis of a conceptual market model of a destination for health tourism, to analyze the marketing activity of Varna municipality in the field of health tourism and to determine the strategic guidelines for its improvement.

Achieving this goal requires the following research tasks to be addressed:

First, systematization of the theoretical aspects of the marketing of a tourist destination for health tourism;

Second, modeling a marketing system at a tourist destination for health tourism trips and developing a methodology for marketing analysis of a destination for health tourism at the municipal level.

Third, conducting analysis of the marketing activity of Varna municipality as a destination for health tourism.

Fourth, outlining guidelines for improving the marketing activity for the development of health tourism in Varna municipality.

5. Research methodology

To achieve the main objective and solve the related tasks, a set of methods is used: statistical, economic and other, the systematic approach is the leading one.

An important element of the toolkit is the development of the conceptual apparatus (concepts, relations, classifications). The concepts are clarified: *health, health tourism, medical tourism, healing tourism, SPA tourism, wellness tourism, balneological tourism etc.* The author offers his own definitions for medical tourism, spa tourism; a classification of health tourism (*health healing tourism, health prophylactic tourism, health wellness or SPA tourism*) has been developed.

The study of tourism is an interdisciplinary problem that can best be solved using the systematic approach. Tourism and health tourism in particular are seen as a model system.

For a more detailed study of the health tourism subsystems and the relations between them, statistical methods are used.

The information provision of the research is carried out through: targeted analysis of specialized scientific publications (monographs, journal articles, published reports in Congresses

and conferences, etc.); analysis of results from empirical studies in dissertations; study and analysis from own studies; analysis of officially published newsletters from the Ministry of Tourism and data from the National Statistical Institute.

In order to validate the conclusions established through the theoretical study and in order to clarify their specifics, an empirical study in the form of surveys has been organized. The results of the studies have been processed using a software product, summarized and analyzed using descriptive statistical methods, and for this purpose are presented in Tabular and graphical form. On this basis, the weaknesses and threats to the sector are identified, which serve as a base for the developed conceptual framework of health tourism, applicable at municipal level.

6. Main limitations and problems of research work

The study is subject to the following limitations:

First, the theoretical emphasis is placed on the definition of the marketing activity of a tourist destination for health tourism at the municipal level.

Second, when determining the competitors of Varna municipality, the opinion of representatives of the stakeholders represented in the respective territorial and administrative unit is probed.

Thirdly, for the purposes of the analysis statistical information of NSI, SOT, Apostille, Apostille was used until October of 2020.

Fourth, the restrictions relate mainly to the gaps and incompleteness in the statistical data necessary for the analytical studies, which reflect the scale and activity of the health tourism sector, in the specific case of Varna municipality.

7. Approbation

Parts of the dissertation work are presented at scientific and practical conferences and are published in specialized scientific journals, which include some of the main theoretical conclusions and recommendations of the author for improving the market position of Varna municipality as a destination for health tourism. Their aim is to enrich the scientific specialized literature in the health tourism sector by bringing out and testing a conceptual market model for the development of health tourism.

The realization of the results of the study will contribute to reducing the seasonality in Varna municipality as a destination for health tourism.

II. STRUCTURE OF THE DISSERTATION

The dissertation is structured out of an introduction, three chapters and conclusions with a total volume of 296 pages, of which: 1 page of content, 209 pages of exposition, 13 pages of used literature and 50 pages of appendices. In support of the exhibition are presented 38 Figures, 47 tables and 26 appendices. The list of used literature covers 122 sources in Bulgarian and foreign languages.

The content is structured as follows:

List of abbreviations used

List of Tables, Figures and appendices

Introduction

Chapter One. Theoretical foundations of Destination Marketing for health tourism

- 1.1. Theoretical aspects of tourism destination marketing
- 1.2. Nature and typology of health tourism
- 1.3. Features of the marketing of a destination for health tourism at the municipal level
- 1.4. Methodology for research of the marketing activity of a health tourism destination at municipal level

Chapter Two. Marketing analysis of health tourism in Varna municipality

- 2.1. Interior environment of Varna municipality as a destination for health tourism
- 2.2. The macro environment of Varna municipality as a destination for health tourism
- 2.3. Market positions of Health Tourism of Varna municipality
- 2.4. Assessment of the competitiveness of health tourism in Varna municipality
- 2.5. Analysis Varna municipality as a destination for health tourism

Chapter Three. Marketing plan for the development of health tourism in Varna municipality

- 3.1. Trends in health tourism
- 3.2. Marketing strategies and goals for the development of health tourism in Varna municipality
- 3.3. Marketing program for the development of Varna municipality as a destination for health tourism.
- 3.4. Results of the marketing program for development of Varna municipality as a destination for health tourism

3.5. Organizational prerequisites for effective marketing activity of Varna municipality as a destination for health tourism

Conclusion

Reference for contributions in the dissertation work

Publications on the dissertation

List of used literature and internet resources

Appendices

III. SHORT PRESENTATION OF THE DISSERTATION WORK

The introduction explains the relevance of the topic. The object and subject of study, the main objective, tasks and research topic are defined. Research methods and limitations in scope are presented.

Chapter One. Theoretical foundations of Destination Marketing for health tourism is dedicated to the theoretical and methodological aspects of Destination Marketing for health tourism at the municipal level, balneology and spa tourism. The essence and some basic concepts in the sector of health tourism, balneology and SPA tourism are studied and refined.

In the first paragraph "Theoretical aspects of marketing of a tourist destination" the main concepts of the dissertation work are presented. Tourist destination is a phenomenon with complex content and the systematic approach has been used for its study. *Marketing of a tourist destination is part of the overall concept of development of the territory and works for integrated sustainable socio-economic development.* The basis of the marketing approach to destination management is the consideration of the tourist destination as a source of a complex tourist product.

In conclusion, the following conclusions are formulated about the essence of marketing of a tourist destination:

First, the municipality is a complex system of socio-economic relations, which acts as a subject for forming the demand for regional resources – labor force and experience, raw materials and materials, investments and information products, forms the supply of products (services) on the regional market – economic specialization of the municipality is carried out. One of the important foundations of municipal government under the conditions of transformation of social and economic attitudes is the formation and decision-making based on marketing.

Second, the marketing management of a tourist destination is a fundamental prerequisite for its competitiveness. For the application of marketing in the management of the tourist destination, it is necessary to analyze the specifics of the resort production, to develop a marketing plan for the municipality. The initial stage of the development of this plan is marketing studies and analysis of the existing situation, compiling a forecast for the future. The second stage is the definition of strategic marketing objectives and the selection of a target market.

Thirdly, the idea of the concept of marketing management for the development of the tourist destination should be reduced to the coordination and harmonization of the social, economic and environmental component of the sustainable development of the municipality together with its territorial, economic and social complexes for a long period. Objective of the concept of marketing management for the development of the tourist destination are: decent and quality level of life of all citizens at the expense of dynamic socio-economic growth; positioning and creation in the municipality of a full, comfortable and healthy living environment; rational and balanced use of all types of resource potential of the municipality; stimulation of market transformations and

implementation of the achievements of modern science, technology and technologies in all spheres of life of the municipality. Thus, the objectives should be: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and timely.

In the second paragraph of the first chapter – **"Nature and typology of health tourism"** –the foundation on which the entire dissertation research is built is laid.

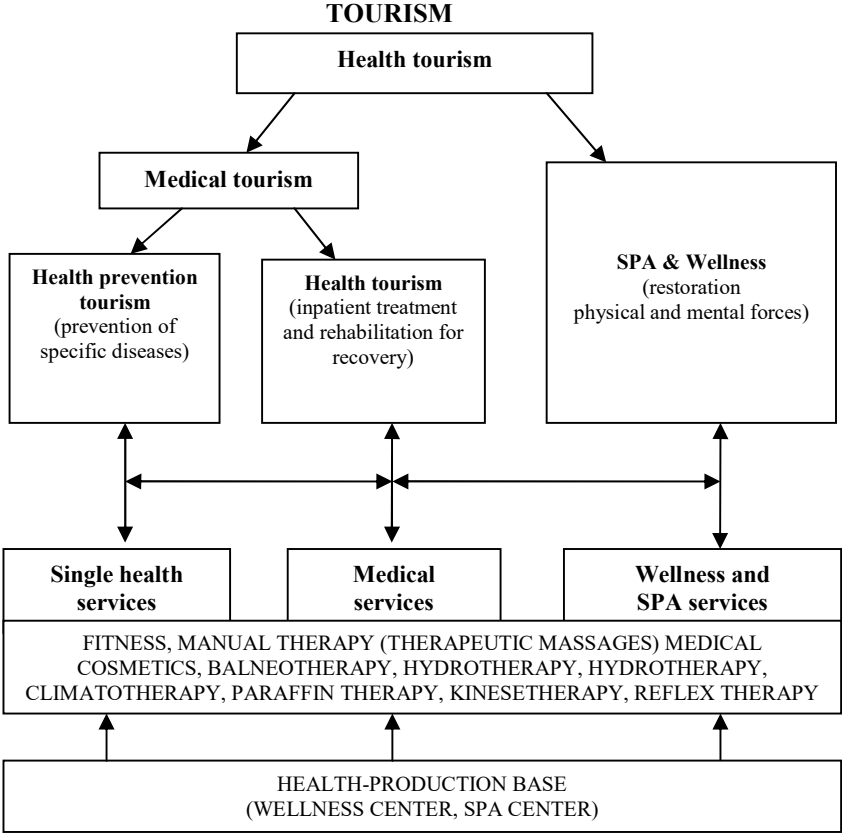


Fig. 1. Classification scheme of health tourism
Source: figure drawn by the author.

The key conceptual categories are clarified: *"health"*,

"health tourism", "medical tourism", "healing tourism" and their definition in the context of established practices and use. According to the World Health Organization's definition of Health, "Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social self-esteem and not just the absence of disease or disability." At the modern stage, the terms "health tourism", "wellness tourism" and "SPA tourism" are synonymous. The characteristic subspecies of health tourism are distinguished on a motivational basis (see below fig. 1)

Health tourism is:

- *health healing tourism* (inpatient treatment or rehabilitation after treatment);
- *health prevention tourism* (prevention of specific diseases);
- *health wellness or spa tourism* (improving well-being by unloading and recharging intellectual, physical and spiritual forces).

In **T. 1.2.** a review of the research work, reflected in geographical and chronological order, which focuses on different areas of the manifestation and development of health tourism, medical tourism, spa and wellness concepts:

First, there is no consensus among researchers on the terminology and classification of health tourism. In most cases equivalent terms are used such as: health, health tourism, wellness tourism, medical tourism, SPA, SPA tourism, SPA services.

Second, health tourism is a specialized type of tourism that uses resort-healing resources and healing services to satisfy recreational needs through the use of healing resources and treatment procedures built on this basis. SPA and wellness tourism are relatively new diversification forms of health tourism, and their rapid pace of development has made them a global phenomenon in the last few decades.

Third, health tourism is based on the insurance system of Health and especially medical travel, with the participation of employers, insurance companies and insurance funds. Attracting significant inflows through healing tourism is related to the promotion of SPA, healing and prophylactic institutions on the international market of medical and wellness services. For this purpose, it is important to bring to the state level priority areas in the field of medical services, such as ophthalmology, cardiac surgery, laparoscopy, etc.

Fourth, for the development of health tourism is important the support of the state targeted programs for research and development of innovation projects in the field of Health. Important is the system of insurance guarantees and the marketing promotion of medical and wellness services on the international market. Visa support for foreign tourists (patients) is essential. At the regional level, the Centers for information and advisory assistance for foreign tourists and for promoting the interaction of Regional Medical public associations with medical associations of other countries play an important role.

In T. 1.3. "Features of the marketing of a destination for health tourism at the municipal level" are interpreted concepts "*Municipality*", "*Municipal Marketing*", "*Marketing Management*". Fig. 2 illustrates the process of development of the destination at the municipal level, based on the application of a marketing approach: the material sphere (including the resort-entertainment subsystem) is directly related to the administrative-management sphere of the municipality, the product of joint activities to satisfy the needs of residents and guests.

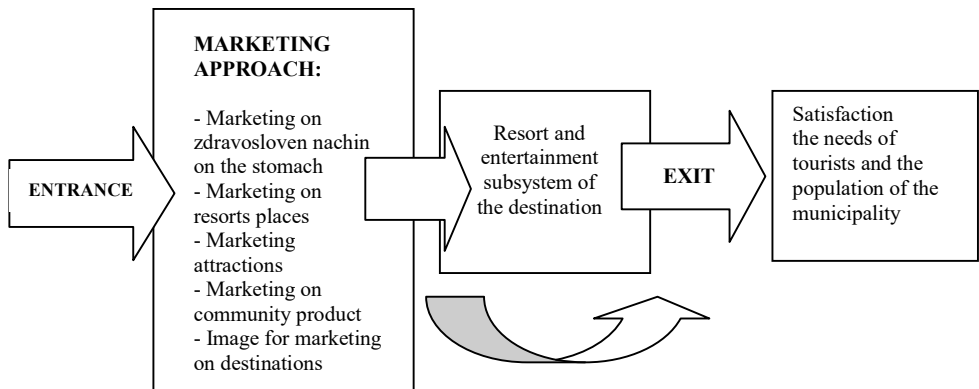


Fig. 2. Development of the destination based on applying a marketing approach

Source: figure compiled by author.

The technology of segmentation of the tourist market for health tourism (synthetic criteria and their analytical signs) is discussed in detail.

As a summary of the interpretations on the process and characteristics of segmentation of the tourism market for health tourism, the following conclusions are required:

First, health tourism is the largest source of export income and at the same time the most important factor in the balance of payments of a significant part of the municipal economies.

Secondly, health tourism stimulates investment in infrastructure, creates friendly intercultural connections and generally contributes to improving the living conditions of the local population.

Thirdly, the study of tourist behavior is a major problematic issue for the municipal destination for health tourism. The ambiguity about the wishes and perceptions of tourists does not allow to formulate a clear goal when offering the product to a health tourism destination at the municipal level.

Paragraph 1.4, entitled "Methodology for research on the marketing activity of a health tourism destination at the municipal level", aims at theoretical research and illumination of the specifics of the marketing of a health tourism destination at the municipal level.

The analysis of the marketing activity of a health tourism destination begins with an analysis of the external and internal environment of the destination. The external environment of the destination is characterized by factors and forces external to the organization that affect its ability to establish and maintain successful cooperation with users.

The concept of Destination Marketing Management for health tourism at the municipal level should anticipate the possibilities of the destination and include an estimate of their financing. The control over the performance of tasks makes a single system necessary to measure the progress of the work on the concept as compared to the project plan, in accordance with the budget and in the form necessary to achieve the objective.

The marketing plan includes **4 directions**: *production, promotion, investment and personnel*. The model of research on the marketing activity of a health tourism destination at the municipal level is presented in Fig. 3.

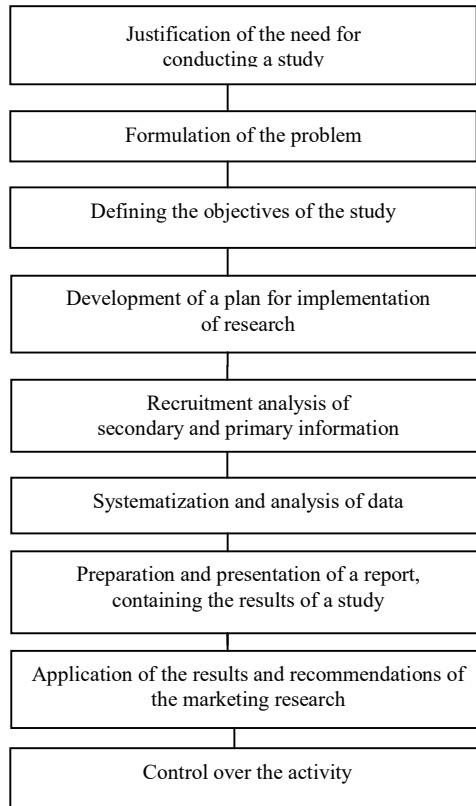


Fig. 3. Model of research on the marketing activity of a health tourism destination at the municipal level

Source: figure compiled by the author.

A model of the in-depth interview and user questionnaire for research of a destination for health tourism at the municipal level has been developed to assess user satisfaction.

In summary, we can draw the following conclusions about the *marketing of a municipal tourist destination*:

First, the municipality is a complex system of socio-economic relations, which acts as a subject for forming the demand for regional resources – labor force and experience, raw

materials and materials, investments and information products, forms the supply of products (services) on the regional market – economic specialization of the municipality is carried out. One of the important foundations of municipal government under the conditions of transformation of social and economic attitudes is the formation and decision-making based on marketing.

Second, the marketing management of a tourist destination is a fundamental prerequisite for its competitiveness. For the application of marketing in the management of the tourist destination, it is necessary to analyze the specifics of the resort production, to develop a marketing plan for the municipality. The initial stage of the development of this plan is the marketing research and analysis of the existing situation and the preparation of a forecast for the future. The second stage is the definition of strategic marketing goals and the selection of the marketing complex for each target market.

Third, the marketing strategy is part of the overall strategy of the objects of management. It is related to setting long – term goals and achieving them as a realization of the objective function of management-marketing.

Chapter Two. Marketing analysis of health tourism in Varna municipality has been developed with the aim of studying the status of Varna municipality as a destination for health tourism. Separate paragraphs are devoted to this.

In paragraph 2.1. "Internal environment of Varna municipality as a destination for health tourism" is analyzed the internal environment of Varna municipality as a destination for health tourism, which establishes that the climate of the municipality, combined with the natural conditions, creates favorable opportunities for development of Industry, Trade, Tourism and communications in the region; great wealth are the hot mineral springs and the healing mud; favorable geographical location and Natural Resources, the Sea coast, the built

infrastructure; the level of employment, the great economic and human potential create real opportunities for development of Varna municipality as a destination for health tourism.

The mineral waters on the territory of the municipality are a significant natural resource with recreational, balneological and thermal energy nature.

In summary of the paragraph it is necessary to conclude that Varna municipality has a favorable climate and natural conditions, which makes it an ideal destination for health tourism. The combination of balneological therapy with mineral water healing and mud treatment with Liman mud has chondroprotective effect and a positive effect on the musculoskeletal system is achieved.

In paragraph 2.2. "Macro environment on the community of Varna as a destination for health tourism" it is established that the technical infrastructure on the community cannot be crossed, but you need to integrate on it, and you need from reconstruction and renewal. The means for spending money on events on ecological programs, landscaping and citizens on cleanliness are not enough, they are forced to do something on the community, so society as a whole should, they are very late for their natural wealth.

Varna is a community with powerful iconographic potential: to develop this industry and the sphere of services. Welcome the investment climate and the opportunity for tourism in pre-delivery for the development of this industry. Unanimously, the Integration plan for the city's reconstruction and development (IPGVR – "Integrated plan 2020") in Varna has selected 3 zones for action: a zone with a predominant social character (the district "Mladost" and the district "Vladislav Varnenchik"); a zone with a potential for economic development (the western zone and the district are located near the north shore of Lake Varna); zone with a high public significance (the

Primorski district, the Odessos district and parts of the Asparuhovo district).

The analysis and evaluation of the superstructure on the community of Varna reveal that community is an attractive destination for 4 seasons, and tourism is one from the founders of the industry to the structure of the economy. It is unique to have access to natural resources with a rich cultural and historical heritage and traditions giving a huge opportunity for rest and entertainment, for the development of health, medical and spa tourism. Tour operators and travel agencies form and offer a wide palette from tourist products (services) to communities (balneological packages for groups, individual tourists).

When analyzing the position on health tourism on the community of Varna in the pazarnite, 2.3 ce has established that the community has a positive trend in the development of tourism on many indicators. According to the data on the Summer of Varna, service the hospitals (for the period 1-31 May 2021) will bleach the general rst from +31 % directly before the start of 2020 . As a tourist destination the community of Varna is surrounded with foreign tourist destinations: Germany is lagging in the position on the broy to serve the village with 27%, Romania – 17.8%, Poland – 13.6%, Great Britain -8%, France – 6%, Ukraine and Moldova – 2.75%, etc. An important step in the development of the possibility for the whole year of tourism is to develop on the thermal complex and spa complex.

Those who spent the night in the place for accommodation on the territory in the community according to the months in 2020 in comparison with the congress of 2019 with the indications in Fig. 4.

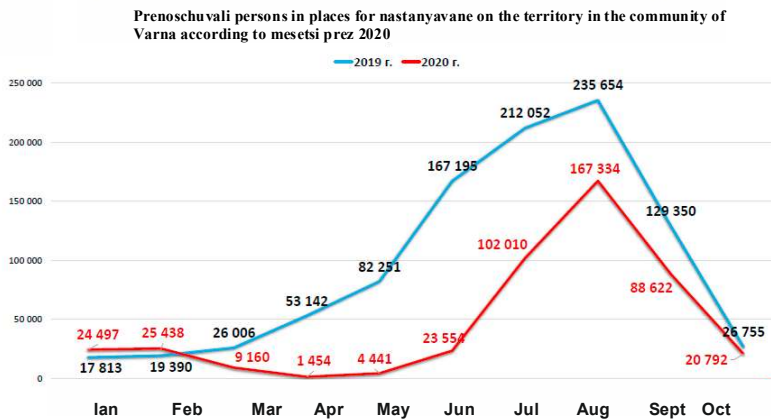


Fig. 4 . Prenoschuvali persons in places for nastanyavane on the territory in the community of Varna according to mesetsi prez 2020 in comparison with the 2019 congress.
Iztochnik: EAT.

In 2020 general number on the tourist site in Varna is over 468 hiladi souls – a decline of 52 % in the period 2018-2019.

The change in the number on the those who spent the night on the territory of the community of Varna prez 2020, directly 2019, is shown in Fig. 5.

In the analysis it is emphasized that after the opening of the borders (16.07.2020) there is an increase in the arrival of tourists and a revival in tourism. In the municipality there are hotel complexes that work with tourist markets from Moldova, Romania and Ukraine and until the end of July they remain closed due to lack of tourists. Tourists from the UK, Germany, France and other countries saw a decline in 2020 from 85%. The shrinking tourist market affects all accommodation establishments in all categories in the same way: approximately 15% of them did not work during the 2020 summer season. The places with categories 1 and 2 stars serve mainly Bulgarian tourists, while more than 50% of the guests in the 4 and 5 star hotel complexes are foreigners.

In paragraph 2.4. "Assessment of the competitiveness of health tourism in Varna municipality" a study of the competitiveness of health tourism in the periods June – September 2019, July-August 2020 among tourists using the service "health tourism" in hotels in Sofia was conducted. Varna and the resorts "St. St. Konstantin and Elena" and "Golden Sands", which work in the field of Health and balneological tourism and are categorized by the Ministry of Tourism. Fieldwork interviews were conducted of major groups of visitors-among 476 tourists, as well as to tourist companies working in the hospitality and restaurant sector. The information and tourist center of Varna also assists in filling out the surveys.

The survey was conducted on 10 indicators that reflect important characteristics of the destination and correspond to main activities in terms of health tourism. The assessment was done on a 5-level scale, with tourists rating the importance of each indicator: 1 – Poor; 2 – insufficient; 3 – satisfactory; 4 – Good; 5 – excellent.

Completed surveys are processed, analyzed and their results are synthesized and presented in Tabular and graphical form. The study involved 267 women (58%) and 209 men (42%), who fell within the age range of 25 to 75 years. The total number of questions from the survey is twenty-two, and the respondents gave answers to all of them, So, there are no missing data. The most foreign tourists are from Germany-26% and Russia – 25%, followed by the UK-19%, Romania – 14%%; 10% of the respondents are from Poland, 6% are from other countries (Israel, Belgium, Denmark, Norway and Ukraine).

Questionnaire of data is processed with use on statistical methods for grouping and typology. As a result, it is possible to identify the segments from the tourist, so that they are worthy of recognition and general recognition. The information is collected, allowing efforts to be made, and the consumers are concentrated in the top, who are interested in purchasing a

tourist health service from this one. So, as a result, it is attached to the method for just grouping and classification, to get the following data: questionnaires are for the time of 25-75 from Bulgaria, Russia, Ukraine, Germany, Romania, Poland and Great Britain. They have the following characteristics: the highest percentage on the respondent between 55 and 65 – 28%; 26% of the total for the age of 45 – 55; the following range between 35 and 45 – 19%; the questionnaire for the age of 65 - 18%. The smallest is percentage on the junior choir at the age of 25 – 35, the analysis on the data from the questionnaire is taught to show the following results:

- Responses often from respondents evaluate such as a lot of good, offer a service for health tourism and prematurely evaluate such as excellent treatment in the community of Varna in 2019 – 2020. Edit the impression that the treatment is appreciated by the whole product on the community of Varna as a tourist destination for health tourism. The relationship between price and quality is determined as such as the strongest country from the offer in the community of Varna health tourism to the moment. It is not necessary to provide comprehensive services and the lack for peace and quiet in the complex (Rep. in hotels) they will determine the country's weakness by the time of the moment (2019 – 2020).

- Foreign tourists will consider that the country's weakness for treatment is due to the lack of material base and unhealthy storage.

- Patients with pain on the musculoskeletal apparatus and nervous system are most likely consumers on the service.

- By the end of 2019 – 2020, balneology, therapeutic gymnastics, calotherapy and therapeutic massages are preferred by the procedural respondent. Get the results from the pre-treatment, no price and tradition in balneotherapy in the community; determine the motives for choosing a destination for health tourism.

- Half of the questionnaire of tourists received information for the proposed service "Health tourism" in the community of Varna from its own tour operator, and answers often from the rest of them are informed from the advertisements wanted or from personal impressions of the pre-visit.

On the basis of the data from the conducted research through the combined psychographic and sociodemographic recognition on the rest of the outline of the profile on the received segment on the tourist in Varna allows to look at it as a destination for health tourism.

First segment is "demanding tourists" – the level on reach 3000 – 5000 lv. absolutely. Those will put the hangings of the search for the km complex for health services and healthily stored. This is not the most multi-family segment (22.82%), represented in a single proportion both from female, and from male at the age between 25 and 45 years, which are most often menials and businessmen. According to the request, we prefer AL (which is included in the price). Optimal sum for a rest on a single people (for 7 nights) AL e 800 – 1000 lv.

The second segment is "loyal tourists" – the monthly income here is between 1200-3000 BGN. This segment is most widely covered (44.8%) by women and men aged 25 to 45, who are mainly employees. For them, it is important that in the pension there are services for organizing healthy meals for guests and a mineral pool. A normal level of comfort of residence (hotel) is preferred.

Third segment "elite tourists" - tourists who have the highest level of income – over BGN 10,000 monthly. This segment is very small – only 2.07%. Important for them are health and medical services, sauna, mineral pool, healthy nutrition. They prefer living conditions with improved comfort. The age of this group is between 25 and 45 years old and between 46 and 60 years old, mostly businessmen and

management positions. More than 80% of respondents come with families and children. The optimal amount for one day of rest per person (for 7 days) is 800 – 1000 BGN.

Fourth segment "thrifty tourists" - for them it is important to have a flexible system for payment of services, as well as organized meals. This segment is 22.4%, represented mainly by women aged between 25 and 45 years with a monthly income level of BGN 1200 – 3000. They are satisfied with the usual level of comfort of life. The optimal amount for a holiday for a person for 7 days is 600 BGN.

The Fifth segment "really appreciative tourists" is very small – 7.91%. Guests included in this group need to expand additional services (medical, health, cosmetic). They prefer living conditions with improved comfort, provision of Health Services, Healthy Nutrition, and mineral pool. Most often they are managers, businessmen aged 25 to 45 years with an income between 5000 and 10000 BGN, mainly from Norway, Germany, Great Britain and Austria. The optimal amount for a holiday for a person for 7 days is 800 -1000 BGN.

The fact that guests in Varna municipality rest with different needs shows the need for a destination marketing strategy in the form of "flexible specialization" – constant innovations and continuous change, through which successfully meet the challenges of "new tourism", as opposed to "old tourism", which is mass, standardized and strictly packaged. The "new tourism" is flexible, segmented, modeled according to the needs of tourists and vertically integrated. Flexible specialization is especially effective with the existing low workload, and this provides an opportunity to attract new segments of guests.

In **T. 2.5.** an analysis of Varna municipality as a tourist destination has been made. It systematizes the strengths and weaknesses of the municipality, as well as the opportunities and threats that correspond to its Sustainable Tourism Development.

Varna municipality can and should develop health tourism in order to attract Bulgarian and foreign tourists not only with its natural resources, but also with the affordable prices of Health Services. In summary of the second chapter is a systematic analysis of Varna municipality as a destination for health tourism. Results are presented in the form of matrix analysis (Table 1):

Table 1

Summarized results from Apostille-analysis of Varna municipality

Internal environment of the destination	
Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Political stability, security of Varna municipality in recent years. - Favorable economic and geographical location on the Black Sea coast and transport accessibility for tourists from all over the world to the country by land, air and water; - Significant presence on the international market as popular Sea tourist centers: Golden Sands, St. Petersburg St. Konstantin and Elena, Raviera, sunny day and Kamchia. - Recreational resources (natural beaches on the Black Sea coast. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lagging development of the overall technical and social infrastructure. - Irrational use of existing natural and artificial resources; - Low level of efficiency in the use of European funds and programmes; - Inefficient system for planning, recruitment, retention and career development of tourism personnel. - Ineffective promotion of the brand of Varna municipality in the information space.
The external environment of the destination	
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Renovation and development of the transport network through the construction of the Black Sea highway and reconstruction of the road artery to the tourist sites. - Improving the development of the overall technical and specialized tourist infrastructure. - Increase foreign direct investment in the tourism sector. - Positive change in the image of Varna municipality, its place and role in the cultural tourism development of Europe and the Balkans. - Increase the demand for year-round services for health tourism, spa, wellness and entertainment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reached the European type of sarin labor, which reflected the adverse impact of the personnel on the tourist activity on the community. - Unfavorable impact on the economy is caused by economic recessions, crisis phenomena and natural disasters (svlachishni and erozni processes, etc.). - The challenge regime for tourists from the country, which is huge for the community/ - Leps on financial means for ecological projects and podobryavane on the tourist image on the community; - Legislative tolerance of km is precomernot and not regulated by building up on resort areas on the sea edge of the Community. - The health of the crisis, caused by the Covid pandemic that.

Източник: таблицата е изготвена от автора.

The basis of the SWOT analysis can be used to generalize, what is the situation in the community by 2021. It characterizes the favorable conditions and factors for local development on health tourism, with the availability of sufficient strength of the country and the opportunities that the moment does not develop:

- the community of Varna has good traditions in training on staff for the health of tourism and the days of its work are strengthened for the introduction of standards and systems for quality in the tourism business; all the more about the preparation on staff and especially on the average staff (with which there is a strong seasonal turnover) is not necessary;

- missing good coordination between different institutions, connected with health tourism, and marketing, inclusive and on the key of the international markets, are weak in comparison with this one on the competition;

- it is logical to get a product that includes high-quality natural resources and honestly new and luxury wanted, but in this time it is poorly served, lips for a sufficient variety of attractions and additional services;

- contact with tourists is weak, somehow on generate markets, on the attitude to marketing, so and so, in the destination, on the attitude to the English on the interest on the guest to the quality and attractive additional services, satisfying technical needs and expectations.

From a friend, the country is observed and not a little "weak country", which represents a restrictive factor for the development of health tourism.

The most serious slack countries and patches are connected with a functioning on tourist sites and personnel security in the sphere of health tourism and are the following:

- not reached at the construction site, equipped and equipped with a spa center in the community, problems are

observed in the community and infrastructure is not completed, there are no buildings, there are no pools and pools with mineral water, etc.;

- there is not a lot of good development on the material and technical base (MTB) in the community;

- predominate often from want, connected with SPA and wellness tourism, are seasonal and not are completely filled even and in the strength of the season;

- come from abroad on a tourist resource not the same as with the these to develop on the community of Varna (this is complex from the reasons, the basis of which is: weaknesses in the preparation on the frame and in the quality of the product, weaknesses in the management and attached to the normative base and deficient and unsecured financial marketing);

- lack of it is legal regulation for the promotion and sub-promotion of tourism in territorial units;

- chronic lack of financial means for ecological projects and improvement on the tourist appearance in Varna and resort complex;

- the onslaught of the health system has been suspended and the onslaught has not been mastered, the health system and medical personnel are in the conditions for a pandemic;

- global climate change – arid and risky, connected with natural disasters.

It should be seen that the community of Varna there is an opportunity to comprehend leadership in the Black Sea region as a destination for health tourism for four seasons through the presentation of natural wealth and popularization on health product, this as a result, increases your competitiveness and spread.

Chapter Three. The marketing plan for the development of health tourism in Varna municipality is dedicated to the marketing planning of Varna municipality as a destination for health tourism.

In T. 3.1. Trends in the development of health tourism are considered trends in the development of health tourism in the context of destination Bulgaria. There are some problems to solve, the main ones being:

First, development of the superstructure and infrastructure of Varna municipality. Providing an opportunity to overcome the geographical and temporal unevenness of the tourist supply: the construction of new modern hotels and spa centers and renovation of hotels with outdated superstructure in the main balneological resorts (overcoming the geographical unevenness) and new modern spa centers in the Black Sea and mountain resorts, which will enable the resorts to be used outside the strong seasons as balneological resorts (overcoming the temporal unevenness); attracting Bulgarian and foreign investments in order to modernize the balneological centers; on the general infrastructure, it is necessary to make efforts to improve the roads and transport, to quickly complete the unfinished sites in the resorts, to improve the type and hygiene of the public places in the resorts – parks, gardens, beaches, restaurants, entertainment establishments.

Second, improvement of the product: improving its quality by introducing quality management systems and applying modern standards in health tourism; training of staff, both medical and general service personnel and policy for retention of personnel (motivation, remuneration, trainings organized by the employer); development of more individualized products (combine the possibilities of different types of Tourism, for example spa and sea tourism, spa and mountain tourism, spa and cultural tourism, etc.).

Third, a well-designed and resourced marketing strategy for the key generating markets: the allocation of greater financial resources for advertising on the generating markets for health and spa tourism, as well as more rational planning of marketing strategies and use of available resources; enhanced

advertising activity for successful presentation of health tourism on the global tourism market.

In order to achieve all this, it is necessary to place the system of Tourism and in particular health tourism on scientific foundations, to create strategies and make decisions based on reliable data, reliable models and reliable management procedures, for which it is necessary to intensify research in this field, to establish a lasting relationship of business with science. The most important thing for the successful development of health tourism is the serious and coordinated work of all participants in the tourism system to achieve synergy effect, sustainable and fruitful growth.

In T. 3.2. Marketing strategies and goals for the development of health tourism in Varna municipality are proposed marketing strategies and goals for the development of health tourism in Varna municipality. The focus is on four priorities:

1. Development of the product of health tourism in the municipality.
2. Improving the price policy of health tourism
3. Improving the distribution of health tourism in the municipality.
4. Improving the communication of health tourism in the municipality.

In the first stage, the overall strategy of the municipality is determined. It is proposed to use a concentrated growth strategy and a differentiation strategy.

A strategy for concentrated growth is change (improvement) or the creation of a new tourism product. Improving the situation of the existing market (at the same time everything is being done to make this tourist product in this market gain better positions), this will require significant marketing efforts.

Differentiation strategy-search for new markets for an already existing tourist product; development of new tourist products for already developed markets.

In T. 3.3. Marketing program for the development of Varna municipality as a destination for health tourism is a systematized marketing program for the development of Varna municipality as a destination for health tourism, which contains 5 specific goals, 17 operational goals and 24 specific projects.

In paragraph 3.4. Results of the marketing program for development of Varna municipality as a destination for health tourism are a summary of the results of the marketing program for development of Varna municipality.

A prerequisite for successful implementation of the strategy and implementation of the marketing program for the development of Varna municipality as a destination for health tourism is the observance of the principle of consistency of higher-level strategies – for example, reporting on the development strategy of Varna District (Regional Development Strategy for the period 2014-2020).(fig.6).

A significant number of benefits are expected from the implementation of projects 23; 27; 20; 16; 17; 6; 8 etc. - referring to the formation of Varna municipality as a destination for health tourism and a center for active recreation. Projects 2, 4, 1, 28 are also significant – in terms of shaping the brand of the municipality as attractive for investment and entrepreneurship. Other expected results relate to projects for the formation of a favorable social environment (Figure 6).

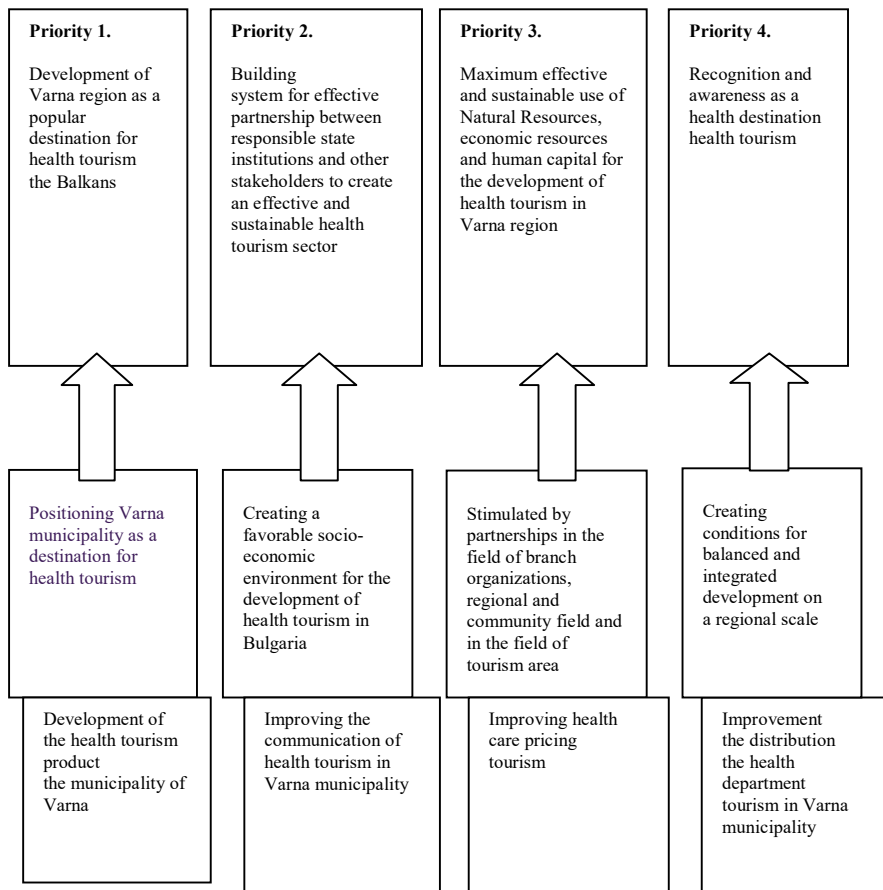


Figure 6. Systematic coordination of priorities of Varna municipality with priority directions for development of Varna region

Source: the scheme was drawn up by the author

*Table 2***Classification of benefits**

List of benefits	Coefficient meaning with focus strategy
Efficient use of the natural resources of the municipality	2
Energy saving, use of alternative energy sources	2
Promoting investment in health tourism and ensuring access to finance	1,6
Quality and affordable health services, healthcare	1
Improving the quality of health tourism services in Varna municipality	2
Ecological status of the territory meeting the requirements for the municipality as a destination for health tourism	2
The original, attractive for guests and residents image of Varna municipality as a destination for health tourism	2
Clean municipality (proper sanitary condition of the destination)	2
Green municipality	2
Quality provision of Spa, Hotel, Beach services	2
Opportunities and suitable conditions for health tourism, cultural recreation, spiritual development, active recreation, entertainment, tourism (including Business, Professional), Physical Culture and sport	1,2
Improving the information provision of the destination	2

Source: the scheme was drawn up by the author

In addition to the research, they have been developed and proposed:

- tourist logo of Varna municipality;
- logo, emblem of Varna municipality as a destination for health tourism;
- examples of using the proposed logo in advertising materials, business documents, website, etc.;

- examples of using the proposed logo in outdoor advertising in Varna municipality;
- examples of using the proposed for outdoor advertising on the territory of Primorski Park in Varna;
- examples of using a frame (zone/ region) for photos in Primorski Park in Varna;
- examples of using the proposed logo in the design of drinking Springs.

In **T. 3.5. Organizational prerequisites for effective marketing of Varna municipality as a destination for health tourism** are developed organizational prerequisites for effective marketing of Varna municipality as a destination for health tourism, which can be systematized and evaluated in three main directions:

First, an analysis of the European experience in health tourism;

Second, the main regulations related to balneology, spa and wellness tourism;

Third, creating a system for interaction between institutions, professional and branch organizations and local authorities for the development of health tourism in Varna municipality.

In the conclusion of the thesis are summarized the more significant conclusions reached in the exposition, linked the results of the conducted empirical study with proof of the author's thesis and outlined guidelines for future research.

IV. REFERENCE FOR CONTRIBUTIONS IN THE DISSERTATION WORK

The dissertation paper contains the following theoretical and practical contributions:

First, in theoretical and methodological terms are updated the definitions of the concepts "*tourist destination*",

"health tourism", "healing tourism", "medical tourism" "spa tourism", "wellness tourism", and their content is interpreted in the context of their modern use. The subcategories of health tourism are differentiated. (Chapter 1)

Secondly, a methodology for research on the marketing activity of a municipal destination for health tourism has been developed. A toolkit for research on marketing activity has been prepared in the form of the in-depth interview and the questionnaire for users of a destination for health tourism at the municipal level. (Chapter 1)

Thirdly, an assessment of the resources for health tourism in Varna municipality has been made. The competitiveness of health tourism in Varna municipality is assessed. Specific methodologies for the study of the combined psychographic and sociodemographic characteristics of holidaymakers in order to form the profiles of tourists of Varna municipality as a destination for health tourism (Chapter 2) have been proposed and tested.

Fourthly, marketing goals and strategies for the development of health tourism in Varna municipality are proposed and a systematized marketing program for the development of the municipality as a destination for health tourism. An advertising strategy has been developed to promote Varna municipality as a destination for health tourism. (Chapter 3)

V. DISSERTATION PUBLICATIONS

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