

# ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL ECONOMIC EFFICIENCY OF HYDRO TOURISM ON THE ROMANIAN BLACK SEA SIDE

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## *Abstract*

*General and specific economic efficiency ratios of the balneary tourism on the Romanian Black Sea coast are presented in this paper, including case studies on the activity of a balneary specialized unit. Specific ratios for balneary tourism, which include both medical efficiency and cost efficiency medical assistance ratios, refer to the economic efficiency of the medical activity in balneary sanatoria.*

*Social efficiency of the balneary tourism may fail to estimate due to the exclusively qualitative features of the activity. Social efficiency is reflected by the increase in labor productivity: formulas in the literature refer to the estimate of labor increase which depends on the period of medical leave before and after balneary treatment.*

*Key words: economic efficiency, balneary tourism, social efficiency.*

Touristic activity has both economic and social effects, concerning the recreation and recovery of physical capacity of human body, extending of knowledge horizon, expressing the need for friendship, communication etc. Within other forms of tourism, the balneary and treatment tourism has more social implications and influence on individual health, his physical and psychological condition and consequently on individual's labor productivity.

New concepts and objectives stand out recently internationally and new objectives for the balneary resorts, congruent with the World Health Organization directions concerning health concept and cures, primary and secondary prophylaxis. The new trend consists of a "positive" health concept that mingles former negative outlook, which is lack of illness and infirmity with a new positive vision that is "well-being", a state of inner comfort of human body.

Reconsideration of health as human fundamental right, adding among health evaluation criteria of the quality of life concept, well-being, and life style have determined a reevaluation of medical care in hydro resorts and of balneology in general as well as of traditional tourism. Between traditional balneology and traditional tourism there is now recreation tourism, of full body recovery, health tourism or prophylactic health cures that consider the quality of life and health preservation and a valid psycho-physical ratio.

Efficient tourism activity means "rational maintenance of basic materials, fuel and energy, labor force and natural assets as well as full exploitation of accommodation, transport, food supplies or financial resources. Moreover, efficiency is emphasized by the necessity of expense in order to settle new technologies of production, development and modernization as well as the manner that the developed activities respond to the tourists needs, may be purchased in optimum conditions and used with maximum results. Analyzing economic efficiency of balneary tourism, an important place is taken by the social-economic ratio. Social effects of tourism are yet hard to quantify because quality is a priority of this activity.

Besides profit set target, hydro tourism brings its contribution to the maintenance and improvement of population health state and consequently of labor force. Within economic-social efficiency characterization both general indicators ( total income amount, average income per tourist and average income per tourist per day, average expense per tourist and average expense per day per tourist, profit rate and capitalization rate, work productivity, net amount of foreign currency, exploitation coefficient of accommodation capacity) as well as hydro tourism specific indicators such as: medical efficiency indicators and efficiency – cost indicators of medical care

Among medical efficiency indicators there are such as:

1. *Indicators of the quality of diagnosis* – non-concordance index between patient reception diagnosis and patient leave diagnosis is important to the quality of balneary patient distribution:

$$In(i_e) = \frac{\text{Diagnosis (incoming /outgoing)}}{\text{Nr. of patients}} \times 100$$

2. Index of bed occupation:  $I_p = \text{No. of hospitalization days} / \text{No. of beds} \times 100$

3. Average duration of hospitalization:

$$Ds = \frac{\text{No. of days of hospitalization}}{\text{No. of patients (ambulatory + incoming)}} \times 100$$

4. Index of traffic:

$$Ir = \frac{\text{No. of patients (ambulatory + incoming)}}{\text{Average no. of beds}} \times 100$$

5. Health index for outgoing patients:

$$\text{Index of deceased in the hospital} = \frac{\text{No. of deceased (death cause)}}{\text{No. of outgoing patients (death cause)}} \times 100$$

In the category efficiency-cost of medical care there are the following:

$$1. \text{Expenses/bed} = \frac{\text{Total expenses/ beds}}{\text{Average no. of beds}}$$

$$2. \text{Expenses/ patient} = \frac{\text{Total expenses/ patients}}{\text{Average no. of beds}}$$

$$3. \text{Expenses/ day of hospitalization} = \frac{\text{Total expenses/hospitalization day}}{\text{Average no. of beds}}$$

Calculation of efficiency indicators in Table 1 allowed appreciation of economic efficiency of medical care within a treatment facility situated on Romanian seaside, that is Mangalia Balneary and Recovery Sanatorium.

*Mangalia Balneary and Recovery Sanatorium* has two modern treatment bases (A pavilion – the treatment base and B pavilion – the ambulatory), as well as accommodation in 1 star hotel with 300 spots and policlinic (hospital) with 50 beds. Moreover, accommodation of tourism that would come for hydro treatment can be done in more than 170 rooms in different hotels in Mangalia resort that the Balneary Sanatorium has service agreements for hydro treatments with.

**Economic efficiency indicators in Mangalia Balneary Sanatorium 2005- 2007**

**Table 1**

Economic efficiency indicator	2005		2006		Semester I 2007	
	Sanatorium	Hospital	Sanatorium	Hospital	Sanatorium	Hospital
No. of incoming patients	4025	995	4325	1060	1625	610
Index of bed occupation	267,5	237	304,5	289	135,5	171

Average time of hospitalization	18	10,74	18	11,5	17,1	11,36
Traffic index	15	22	17	25	8	15
Expenses/bed (lei)	20325	13344	21556	22821	11430	11430
Expenses/patient (lei)	1349	672	1495	1077	2114	942
Expenses/day of hospitalization (lei)	84,6	62,5	83,6	94	124	83

The analysis of the above table efficiency indicators shows an increase of bed occupation index from 267,5% in 2005 to 289% in the year 2006. Expenses/bed indicator grew in 2006 against 2005 with 6,06% in the sanatorium and with 71,02% in the hospital. Another increase is recorded at the expenses/patient indicator, so that in 2006 this indicator grew with 146 lei against 2005 in the sanatorium, and with 405 lei in the hospital. Such increases were thanks to an increase in the number of patients from 4025 in 2005 to 4325 in 2006, that is with 7,45% in the sanatorium and with 6,5% in the hospital.

New conceptions and orientations in modern medicine concerning health as fundamental human right, introduction among evaluation criteria of the concepts of life quality, well-being, life style have determined a reevaluation of medical care in the hydro resorts, of balneology in general and traditional hydro tourism.

Between traditional balneology and traditional tourism there is now recreation tourism, of full body recovery, health tourism or prophylactic health cures that consider the quality of life and health preservation and a valid psycho-physical ratio. An increase in the number of "healthy" patients that use treatment facilities with natural resources as means of regaining good health requires re-adaptation of structure and infrastructure in hydro spas on Romanian seaside in order to provide at the same time more types of activity: health cures for young and healthy adults, secondary and therapeutic prophylactic cures for sick people, recovery cures for functionally handicapped people.

Within these transformations, the efficiency of the balneary activity may be appreciated according to the following aspects:

- contribution to the improvement of health state by means of: calculation of expense destined to health recovery and estimation of a decrease of average time for medical leave based on balneary treatment.
- increase of work productivity of outgoing tourists according to their activity in time.

Social effects are transformed in economic effects, expressed in expenses or incomes. In order to increase economic efficiency of Romanian balneary tourism and hydro tourism on the seaside several development directions should be followed: improvement of general environment of the resorts, large exploitation of available natural resources, diversification of treatment activities, increase of competitiveness in accommodation, development and improvement of restaurants, various entertainment options and specific actions.

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