

SCOTLAND TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF GLOBAL HEALTH TOURISM BOOM



Experts from VisitScotland claim that health-related holidays are one of global tourism's biggest trends. The population in European countries is growing older. This and the rising disposable incomes are important facts for the health-related tourism. The tourist industry encourages wealthy visitors to Scotland's countryside, advertising its fresh air and unspoiled nature. Scotland has vast areas for hiking as well as cycling holidays. Walking and cycling holidays bring an estimated £220m into Scotland annually.

According to VisitScotland, "pampering packages" can be successful. The fact that the population is aging is supposed to cause a boom in health-related tourism. More people will be interested in walking and fitness. As the life gets faster and more stressful, people want to slow down. This is important for the tourism industry and for those who plan the investments in it. The target group for Scotland comprises people recovering from surgeries. There should be also fitness camps for more active tourists and camps to fight childhood obesity. VisitScotland also recommends expansion of the health spa market.

Nowadays staying fit and healthy is consumers' top priority. This opens huge opportunities for businesses connected with health-related consumer products like anti-ageing creams, day spas and medical procedures. This market is said to be ready for rapid expansion. As Ian Yeoman, VisitScotland's scenario planner says it is unlikely for patients to go to Scotland for treatment. However, the patients could visit Scotland for their rehabilitation.

John Lennon, professor of tourism at Glasgow Caledonian University, said: "We do not have a monopoly on the great outdoors and most northern European countries will be looking to cash in on the same market." So it is important for Scotland's tourism industry not to stay behind speaking of investment and advertising.

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