

# Belgium: Most Medical Tourists Come from the Netherlands

Belgium is a country that has witnessed a significant rise in the number of patients who travel to the country seeking treatment. Most of these patients are from the Netherlands. Majority of them are seeking orthopedic treatment, heart surgery and caesarean sections.



Statistics conducted have also proved that there are many patients from France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and the UK who visit Belgium for the purposes of getting medical treatment. However, the number of hospital patients from USA, Romania, Poland and Spain has significantly declined. There has only been a small increase of 18% from the year 2007 to 2012.

In 2010, Belgium welcomed more than 46,000 patients from other neighboring European nations. However, this number excludes the patients who visit the country seeking cosmetic surgery and dental treatment. The statistics revealed that most of the patients head to Brussels, Antwerp, Bruges, Hasselt and Ghent. All these are generally the major tourist destinations in Belgium.



The exact proportions in terms of percentage indicate that 60% of these patients came from the Netherlands, France produced 20% and Luxembourg had 4.5%. The UK, Italy, Germany, Spain and Romania all had less than 3%. Most of the tourists from Netherlands, Luxembourg and France are medical tourists. Visitors from Romania and Poland were mainly temporary migrants. However, with many rules and regulations being released every year, these numbers are expected to change.

Among the 46,000 patients 30,000 of them were Dutch. This is a higher figure compared to that recorded in 2007. Most medical tourists from the Netherlands go to Belgium because of the long waiting list in their country. As the EU introduces new rules about border healthcare, both the Netherlands and

Belgium are set to implement them and this will definitely impact the number of medical tourists going to Belgium.



Belgian authorities monitor and measure the effect of growing numbers of overseas patients. One of the aims is to ensure that the waiting list for patients in Belgium does not augment because of the arrival of medical tourists. Presently, the situation has not affected the Belgian residents. Necessary precautions and measures have been put in place to ensure that the situation does not reach to this level.

Date: 2013-12-30

Article link:

<http://www.tourism-review.com/travel-tourism-magazine-most-medical-tourists-in-belgium-are-dutch-article2281>