

MEDICAL TOURISTS HEAD TO CROATIA, ARMENIA, OR EVEN TURKMENISTAN



Central and Eastern European countries are quickly developing their medical tourism. The countries offer cheaper yet quality health care and they are easily accessible from Western Europe.

The biggest attraction for medical tourists is almost always the cheaper price. Sometimes the cost of a surgery in Eastern Europe may be even 70 per cent cheaper than in the US or in the UK. Nevertheless, there are also many medical tourists from Russia because it is problematic to receive some kinds of treatment back home.

Armenia for example offers cosmetic or dental procedures. Laser surgery is also available in this former soviet country. Clinics in Yerevan perform laser hair removal and corrective laser eye surgery is also available. Doctors in Armenia perform even more complex surgeries than the cosmetic ones, like for example open-heart surgery.

An American company (Stem Cells for Hope) researches and develops the treatment of patients with stem cell transplantation therapy. Currently they operate in the **Ukraine** and the **Republic of Georgia** where they managed to obtain a necessary permit of the government bodies. They plan to establish themselves also in other East European countries.

In **Turkmenistan**, a \$5 billion health/medical tourism project is under way. The intention is to create a special centre for health tourism. Foreign investors should build sanatoria, health centers, spas, hotels and other tourism facilities.

Croatia is an emerging medical tourism destination too. Its best selling “product” is dentistry but cosmetic surgery with cheap face lifts, liposuction, breast enlargements and so on, is also on the rise. **Cyprus** offers good health care and it is also an interesting tourism destination. According to official data, at least sixty per cent of local private medical centers are now treating overseas patients.

The **Czech Republic** is well known for its dentistry, but it does not fully capitalize on its high quality health care system. Among other medical tourism destinations in the central and Eastern Europe belong e.g. **Poland**, **Hungary**, **Lithuania** and **Latvia**.

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