

HEALTH TOURISM REVENUES IN TURKEY DROPPED BY 35%



The conflict between Israel and Palestine has hurt health tourism in Turkey, which is a significant source of revenue for the country, particularly during the winter season. In the past years, Turkey has seen substantial growth in health tourism, generating over 4 billion dollars in revenue last year.

Turkey has been a popular destination among health and medical tourists, with 1.4 million visitors in 2022. **Turkey's most popular medical branches for patients seeking health tourism are gynecology, internal medicine, ophthalmology, medical biochemistry, general surgery, dentistry, orthopedics and traumatology, infectious diseases, and ear-nose-throat.** In addition to these, hair transplantation, aesthetics, and beauty treatments are also highly sought after.

The country had expected to host 1.8 million medical tourists this year. In the first quarter of 2023, the sector generated 453.7 million dollars in income, a 10.7% increase compared to the same period in 2022. However, due to ongoing wars, the loss has surpassed 35% by the 10th month.

Worst Period in the Last 10 Years

The earthquake that occurred on February 6 hit the sector. Additionally, the elections in Turkey during that time were difficult, and soon after, the Israeli-Palestinian war broke out. According to experts, health tourism has gone through its worst period in the last 10 years. The Israeli-Palestinian war has had both direct and indirect effects on Turkey's health tourism industry.

During the pandemic period, health tourism from Israel to Turkey accelerated and provided significant economic benefits to Turkey, but clinics lost patients from Europe at the same time. However, they were able to recover some of their losses through Israeli patients. The number of Israeli patients has increased over time, and their contribution to Turkey's economy has been substantial.

Some Markets Could Be Lost

The contribution of Israeli patients seeking health treatments in Turkey to the country's economy is significant. However, **recent developments have led to unfinished treatments and canceled reservations, causing concern for the industry.** Experts believe that the effects of the current situation will last for some time and that the loss of the Israeli market in the health tourism sector is a real possibility. It's worth noting that some European patients have also canceled reservations due to the ongoing conflict. Overall, the sector is facing a difficult period, and it's uncertain when things will improve.

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