



InnovaSPA

Interreg Europe



European Union
European Regional
Development Fund


Promotion of the use of natural resources in the area of preventive health by the InnovaSpa project

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field of Balneology and SPA Tourism, Riga, Latvia

InnovaSpa project - Innovative health solutions for thermal spa regions



Challenges:
aging
population;
needs of health
prevention

Main objective: exchanges of experiences between 8 thermal regions in Europe on issues related to health innovation linked to thermalism.
Duration: June 2018 – November 2022.

Project website www.interregeurope.eu/innovaspa

Terminology

The Global Wellness Institute defines the **wellness economy** as industries that enable consumers to incorporate wellness activities and lifestyles into their daily lives. (<https://globalwellnessinstitute.org/what-is-wellness/wellness-economy-definitions/>)

SPA: health resort (that promotes Wellness), especially one where there are one or more mineral springs with waters that possess therapeutic properties. (<https://medical-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/spa>)

InnovaSpa project:

- Thermal SPA (SPAs using thermal resources, such as balneal resources)
- Medical SPA / Health SPA / resort (most of European countries)
- Resort rehabilitation centre (Latvia, Lithuania)
- Sanatorium (former USSR – spa resorts with medical services)

Project tasks

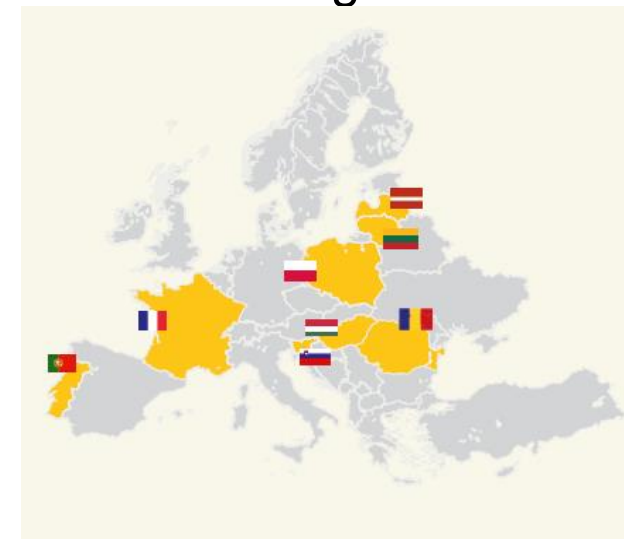
Tasks:

- Identify and transfer good territorial policies or instruments developed by Managing Authorities and dedicated to thermal innovation in the field of preventative health;
- Analyse regional situation with respect to using thermal and natural resources for health prevention (Reciprocal Improvement Analysis);
- Involve regional stakeholders and actively work with them;
- Create regional Action plans to improve policy instruments and implement them.



8 partners in 8 thermal regions from 8 EU countries

1. **Thermauvergne** association (lead partner) in France - Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region
2. **University of Debrecen** in Hungary - Eszak-Alfold region
3. **University of Latvia** – Latvia
4. **Development agency of the Warmy and Mazury region** in Poland
5. **Development agency of the region Centru** in Romania
6. **Lithuanian Innovation Centre** in Lithuania – Vilnius region
7. **Faculty of Medicine of the University of Porto** in Portugal – Porto region
8. Development agency of **Savinjska region** in Slovenia



STUDY VISITS OF THE 1ST YEAR

Study visit in Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region (France)

Discovery of the

- Full Health Resort concept
- Vichy Spa Les Célestins
- Regional and National Thermal ecosystem



Study visit in Eszak-Alfold region (Hungary)

Discovery of the

- Sauna session
- Hungarospa in Hajduszoboszlo & Great Forest, Aquaticum and Debrecen
- Regional and National Thermal ecosystem



Study visit in Vilnius region (Lithuania)

Discovery of the

- Medical Spa concept
- Druskininkai & Birštonas
- Regional and National Thermal ecosystem



Study visit in the Norte region (Portugal)

- Therapeutic SPAs in Norte, Portugal
- History of thermas, cures and waters
- Water route Chaves – Verin
- Education in Medical Hydrology at the Porto University





PREVENTIVE HEALTH AND SPA MEDICINE IN LATVIA

Wellness industries in Latvia

- More than 100 springs, mineral waters with health properties, thermal waters, mud, clay, sapropel, sea and white sand, fresh air and forests;
- Resort cities of Latvia (8), Latvian Medical Export Association, Latvian Health Tourism Cluster;
- City of Jurmala – Member of the European Health Resorts and SPAs associations; status of the healthy city provided by the WHO.



SWOT – Latvian Wellness Sector

STRENGTHS

- Resort medical treatment traditions;
- Unique natural healing resources available for a long term use;
- High standards and quality of service provision;
- Variety of services for comparatively low costs;
- Well established cooperation between health and tourism sectors.

WEAKNESSES

- Outdated infrastructures & too little innovation;
- Low support from state and local governments;
- Underdeveloped public resort infrastructure (sea water basins, etc.)
- Potential of existing resort rehabilitation centers and medical SPAs isn't fully used;
- Inadequate education/training system, lack of new professionals.

SWOT – Latvian Wellness Sector

OPPORTUNITIES

- Promote innovation based on the use of local natural resources and traditions;
- Encourage the development of a high-quality infrastructure, modernize existing resort rehabilitation centres and medical SPAs, as well as to create the new ones;
- Use the geographical location by the Baltic Sea, climate and ecology more actively;
- Continue to increase diversity and quality of services by learning from international experience;
- Attract more external and local funding.

THREATS

- Insufficient number of new qualified specialists & brain drain can reduce the opportunities and competitiveness of rehabilitation and medical treatment offerings;
- Lack of the state and EU funding and support may further cause deterioration of the resorts' competitiveness;
- Strong competitiveness from neighbouring countries resulting in a loss of clients;
- Possibility of the deterioration of the resort areas and natural resources.



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Thank you!

Questions welcome



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