

## **Medical tourism as a global challenge**

### **Medico legal aspects of medical tourism between Turkey and Bulgaria**

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#### **Objective:**

The goal of this paper is to show the legal challenges in front of Turkish providers of medical services organizing medical tourism activities. Differences between Turkish and EU legislation bring a lot of legal risks for both sides – doctors and patients. Until two years ago most cases and challenges were about malpractice litigation, insurance litigation, safeguarding patients' data etc., but now when Turkish investors became the biggest player on Bulgarian private healthcare market and there are new risks related to Turkish physicians providing consultations or making operations abroad, in private hospitals.

#### **Materials – Method:**

This work takes into consideration the existing norms – national laws, EU law and specific regulations, as well as the existing body of case law (court practice). Comparative legal analysis is made of all the main alternatives provided by the Law, which are obligatory for the organization and practice of medical tourism.

#### **Findings:**

During the working process on this paper, we found that neither patients, nor doctors are aware of the legal risks of medical tourism.

#### **Result:**

The comparative legal analysis provides the possibility of bringing into focus the majority of flaws and omissions in current regulation when it comes to medical tourism. The paper explores the possibilities of improvement and possible alternative solutions that would achieve a legal framework that better safeguards the interests of patients and also provides a safer working environment for medical practitioners and private clinics and hospitals.

**Keywords:** medical tourism, medical law

**Case (case) for presentations:** The most common problems of the medical service providers in field of medical tourism - examples from Bulgarian institutions, patient complaints and initiated litigation cases.

**Keywords:** Bulgaria, Turkey medical tourism, medical law aspects