



# EUROPE: HUNGARY

## **What are the most significant global issues facing us today?**

The key global issues are as follows:

- access to clean water and food
- increasing polarization within societies and between countries and regions
- global financial and political instability and the growing popularity of extreme views/politics
- transport costs are expected to grow while resources become scarce
- time to be spent on personal needs (e.g. relaxation, rejuvenation) becomes shorter and shorter
- (more) sustainable and efficient operation

The most important issues that affect wellness and spa tourists and tourism can be divided to two groups. One set of issues stems from the changes in demand. In the Western world, changes in (post)modern lifestyle result in more health conscious consumers and new segments emerge (e.g. men), while in Asia or in the Middle-East, traditional wellness and spa provisions gain ever growing popularity.

On the supply side, wellness and spa tourism providers and suppliers have been introducing innovative, fusion and cross-over products and services with which they want to keep the already existing but saturated demand, and want to attract new segments (e.g. Gen Z) to spa and wellness facilities.

## **What do you see as the main innovations happening around the world, those which are game changing and /or disruptive?**

Anything 'smart' definitely changes how people live and think. This is the game changing element. Still, the overwhelming forms and ways of social media may take over one's life. There are so many channels (e.g. private and business oriented) that are getting rather stressful, very time consuming and consequently more and more expensive, to keep up with what everybody else says and to be sure that one transmits the messages in every important form. All the time.

On the contrary, simple is gaining more and more popularity. Underdeveloped economies require unusual and therefore often innovative solutions, e.g. solar power charged mobile phones in Africa that can serve as exemplary for the developed world. Especially if one takes the measures of sustainability seriously.

## **What do you see as the main innovations in the spa/wellness industry (existing and future)?**

Innovations affecting wellness and spa tourism are either technological or based on a creative thought. Technology helps to get services, products and approaches to people who are not present (e.g. post-trip services or apps) and technology also helps determine – pre-trip – what kind of expectations one spa or wellness tourist may have during his or her stay (e.g. smart online booking tools). New and fusion products (mainly machines) can revolutionize certain treatments (either beauty or wellness).

The creative and adaptive mind helps service providers to adapt trends to certain locations and to conditions, which in return will offer services that are considered by travellers as unique and innovative (e.g. combination of adventure or eco approach to spas).

### What do you see as the greatest opportunities/challenges for the global spa and wellness industry?

The greatest opportunities can be found in what we have already. Traditions, rituals, assets or services will be essential for the spa and wellness industry. This is especially true if tourists are expected in any spa or wellness facility. Also, the spa and wellness industry has to work together with healthcare and education, since the future wellness and spa demand needs to influence, inform and educate from very early age. Those who live in a healthy or healthier lifestyle will become frequent, loyal and reliable spa and wellness customers. This is, however, not only an opportunity, but a challenge, too.

Another challenge is the global convergence to do very much the same everywhere. Most new wellness and spa (tourism) developments tend to follow the same patterns, or clichés all around the world. This will make the market saturated very fast. Remember NO2C: No copying, no clichés!

### What are some practical ways for the business to create a climate for creativity and innovation?

Creativity is in the thinking and not in technology or machines. Most of the time the most successful, striking or inspirational innovations are based on one or only a few basic, but not properly cultivated, ideas. Moreover, creativity and innovation does not need to be expensive or costly. People (customers) appreciate the thought, the power of the mind and less interested in gadgetry, which tends to become 'tired' way to quickly anyway.

Large companies, e.g. spa or wellness hotel chains tend to depend on their 'Service Manual' very closely. This is understandable, from a branding and quality assurance point of view, but it limits the creative mind.

Spas and wellness facilities can learn from the management styles of successful companies of our century, those that introduced and applied a different management systems and innovation circles. They encourage any employee to come up with his or her idea that would then be discussed by development teams and can be taken further.

Plus, it is assumed that consumer psychologists and experience planners will have crucial roles in the development of new and in the enhancement of existing products. Why? Because these experts can translate the needs, motivations and expectations (even the latent ones!) to terms that can help companies to provide the services and products with expected benefits and qualities.

#### SUBMITTED BY

László Puczkó & Melanie Smith  
The Tourism Observatory for Health, Wellness and Spa  
Hungary  
E: lpuczko@xellum.hu  
W: www.thetourismobservatory.org  
W: www.xellum.hu



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