

GENERAL PRACTITIONERS STAFFING SITUATION IN EUROPEAN HEALTH SYSTEMS

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OBJECTIVES

Ensuring the workforce needed for effective primary health care is now a priority policy area. The aim of this research is to map the staffing situation of general practitioners (GPs) in European OECD countries between 2000-2021. The analysis also aims to explore the changes and spatial disparities in the supply of GPs in Hungary between 1990-2022.

METHODS

The number of general practitioners indicator of the "OECD Health Statistics 2021" database were analyzed for the period 2000-2021. The 24 European OECD countries included in our study were grouped by geographical location and compared using parametric and non-parametric tests for the years 2000, 2010, 2021. Using the database of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office, we performed descriptive statistical analysis and regression analysis to investigate the Hungarian GP coverage and its spatial disparities.

RESULTS

In international perspective, in 2000, the average number of GPs per 100,000 population was 67.3 persons in Eastern Europe; in Western Europe, it was 99.1 persons. In 2021, the average number of GPs per 100,000 population was 83.0 persons in Eastern Europe; in Western Europe, it was 133.8 persons. Significant results were obtained in all three study years for the number of GPs per 100,000 population in Eastern and Western European countries ($p=0.029$; $p=0.015$; $p=0.019$). Since the early 2000s, the number of GPs in Hungary has been decreasing. In 2000, the number of GPs per 10,000 population was highest in the Central Hungary region (7.03) and lowest in the Northern Hungarian region (6.19). In 2022, the number of GPs per 10,000 population was highest in the Southern Transdanubian region (6.56) and lowest in the Central Transdanubian region (5.48).

CONCLUSIONS

GP coverage in Western Europe is significantly higher than in Eastern Europe. There are significant regional disparities in GP coverage in Hungary

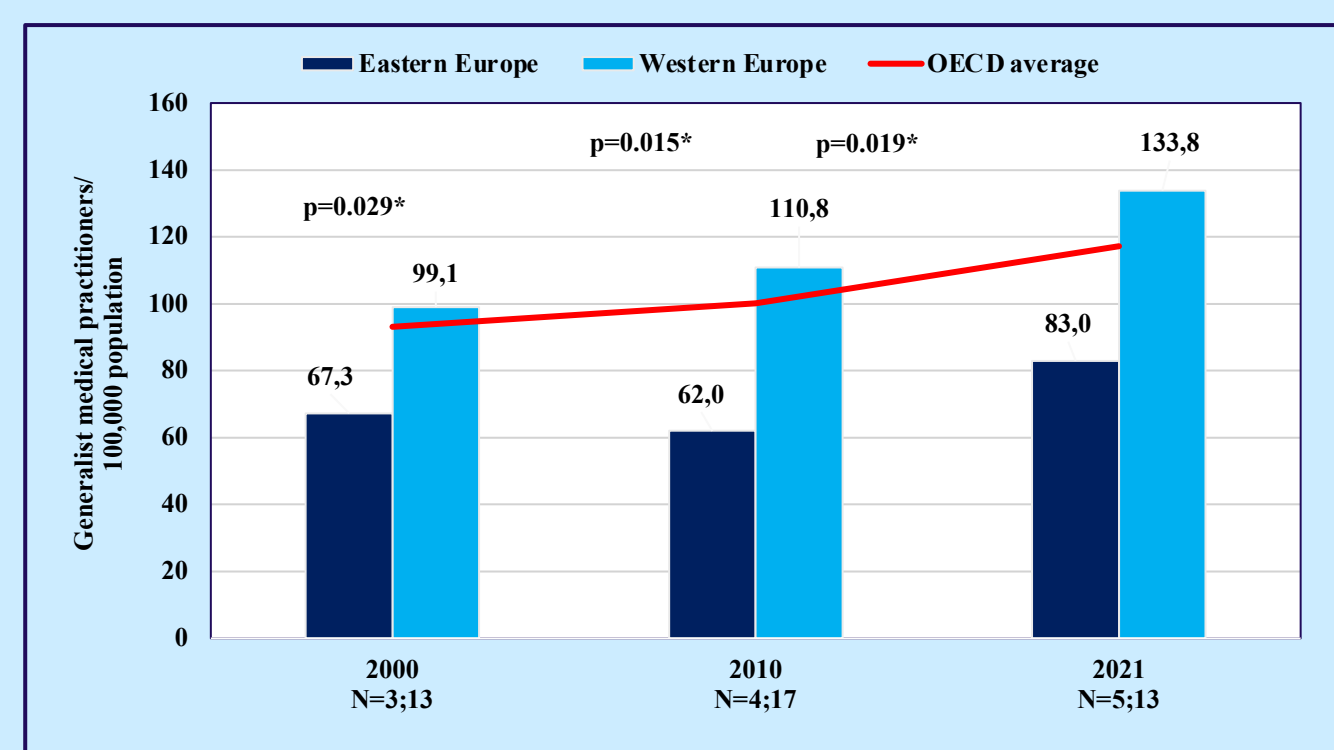


Figure 1.
Changes in the number of generalist medical practitioners in Europe (2000-2021)

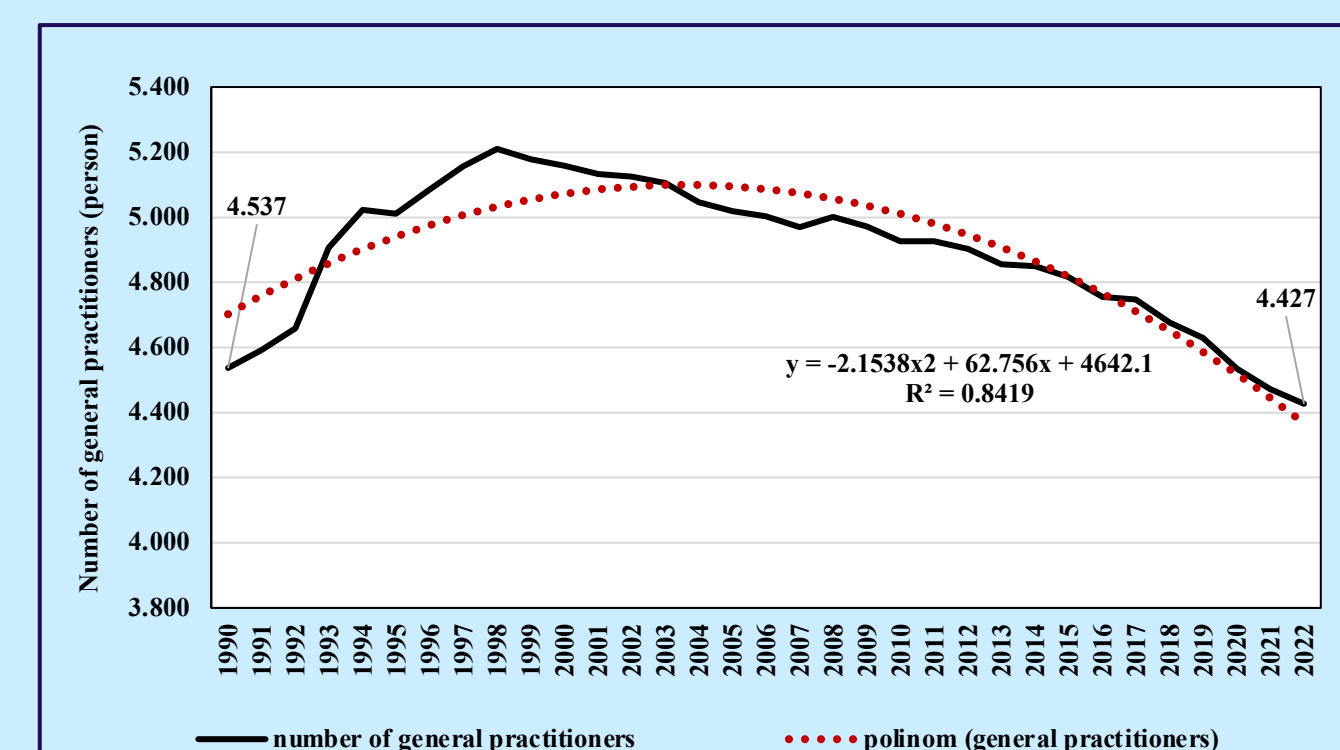


Figure 2.
Trends in the number of general practitioners in Hungary (1990-2022)

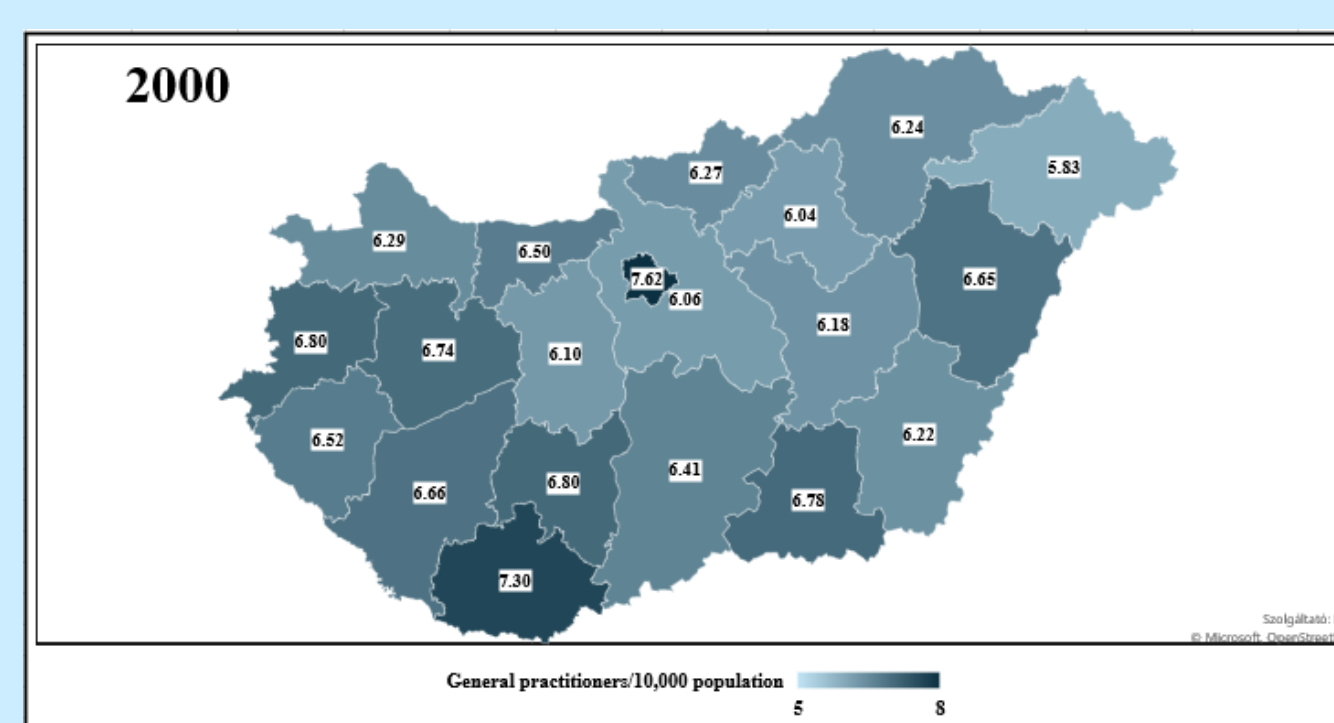


Figure 3.
Number of general practitioners per 10,000 population by county in Hungary in 2000

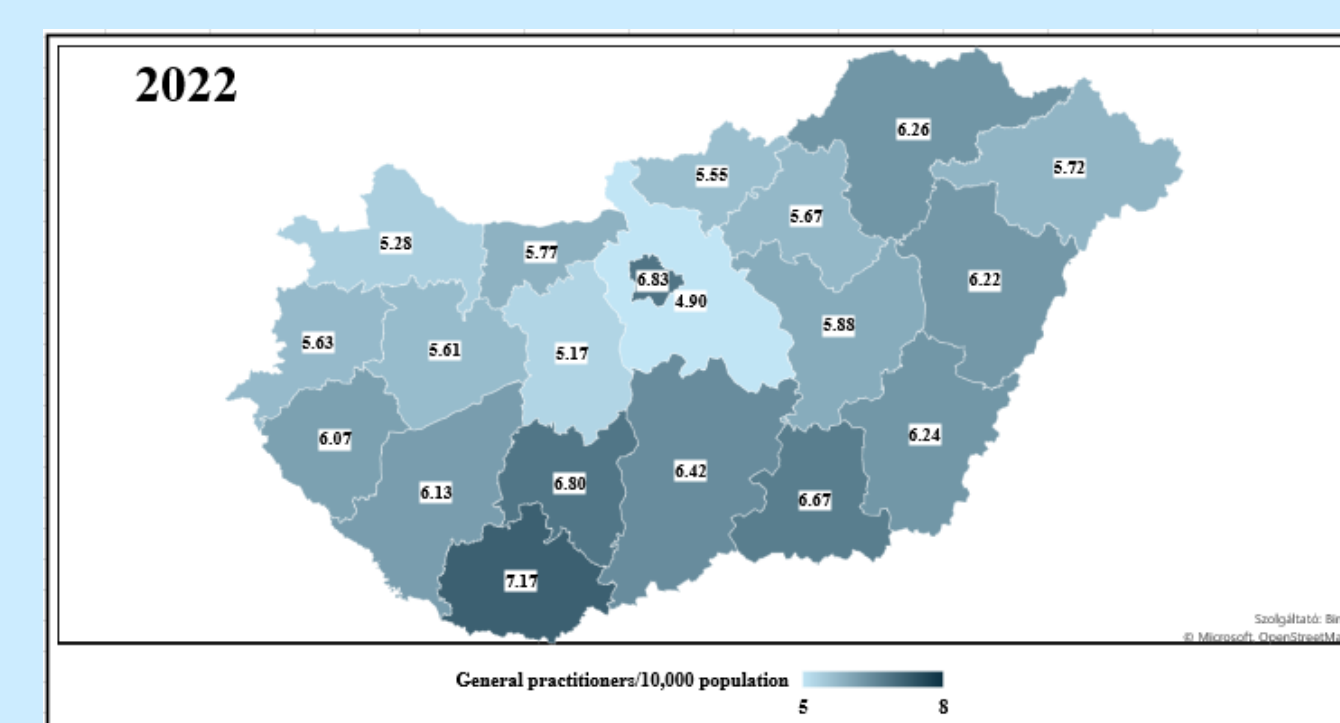


Figure 4.
Number of general practitioners per 10,000 population by county in Hungary in 2022

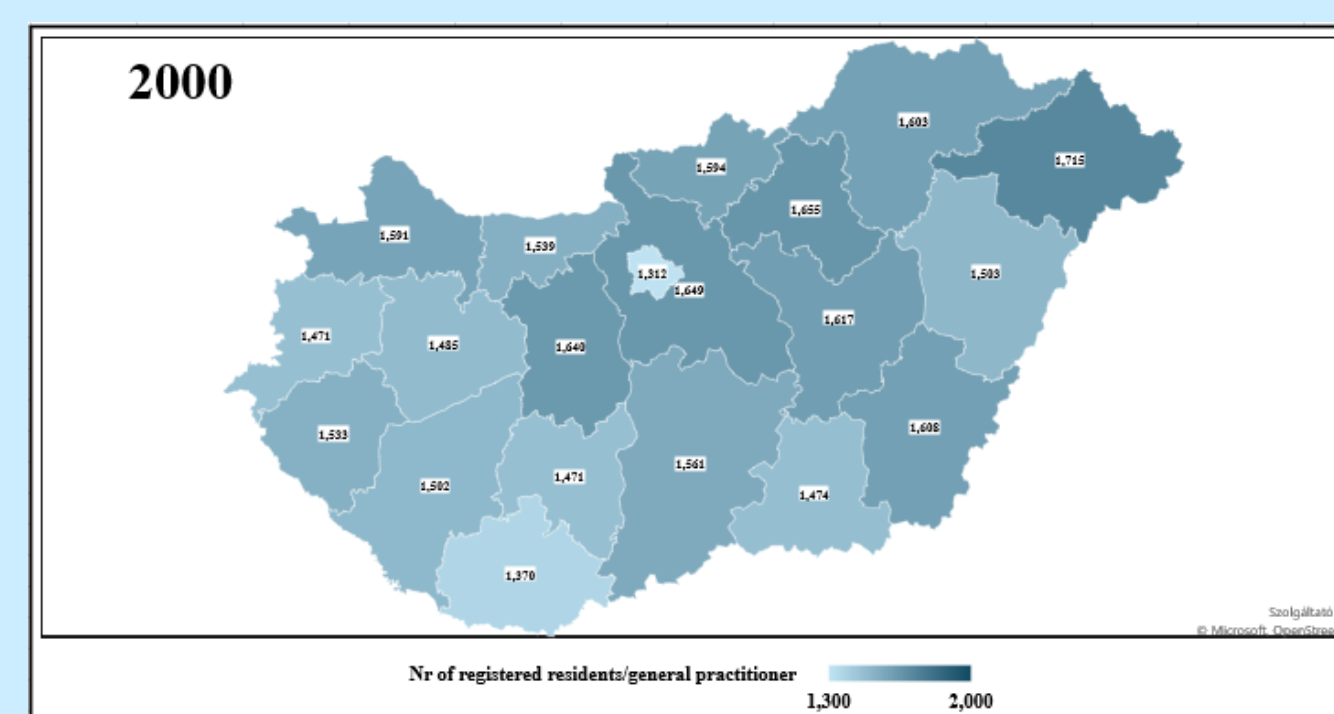


Figure 5.
Number of registered residents per general practitioner by county in Hungary in 2000

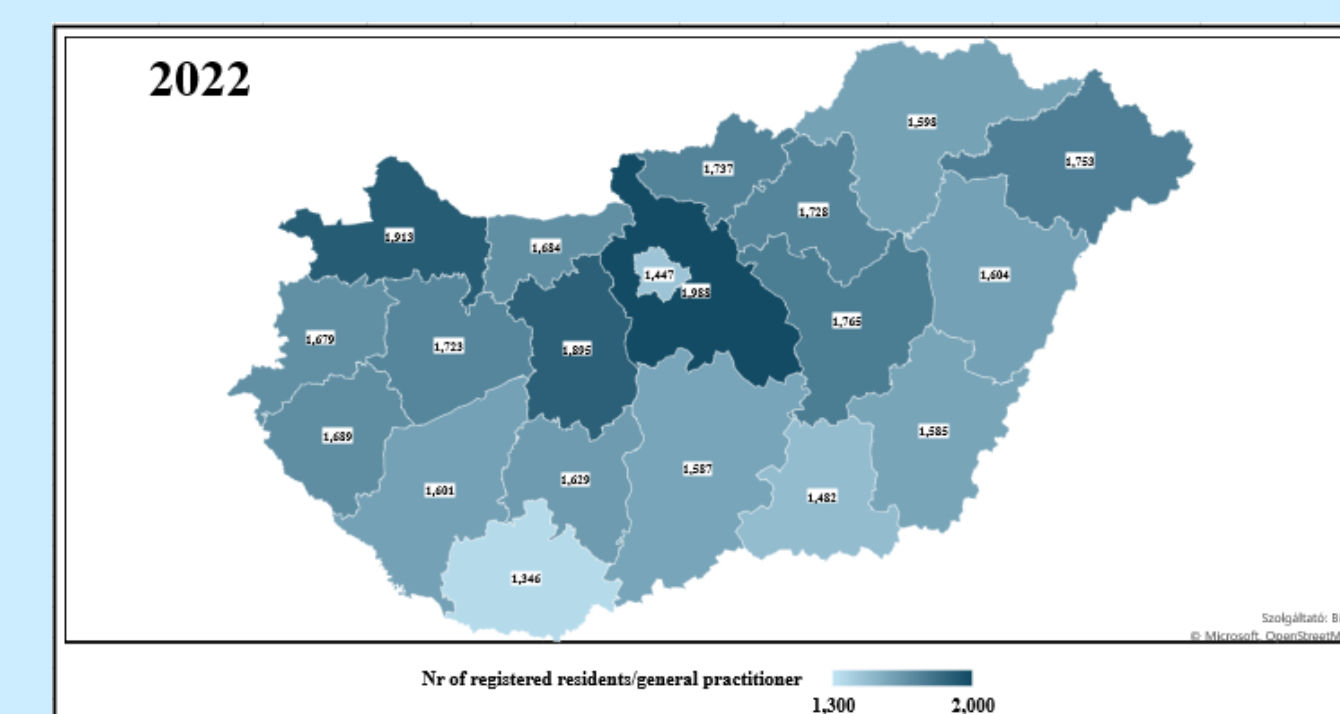


Figure 6.
Number of registered residents per general practitioner by county in Hungary in 2022

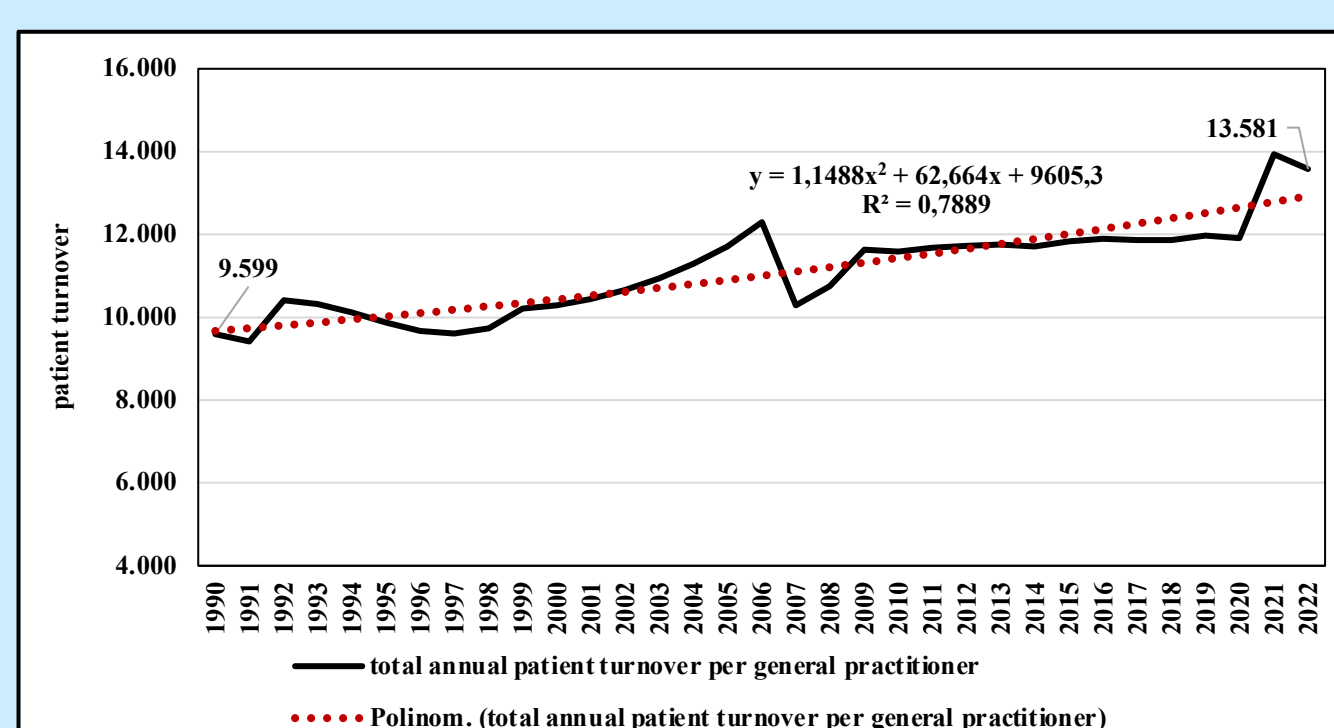


Figure 7.
Annual patient turnover per general practitioner in Hungary (1990-2022)

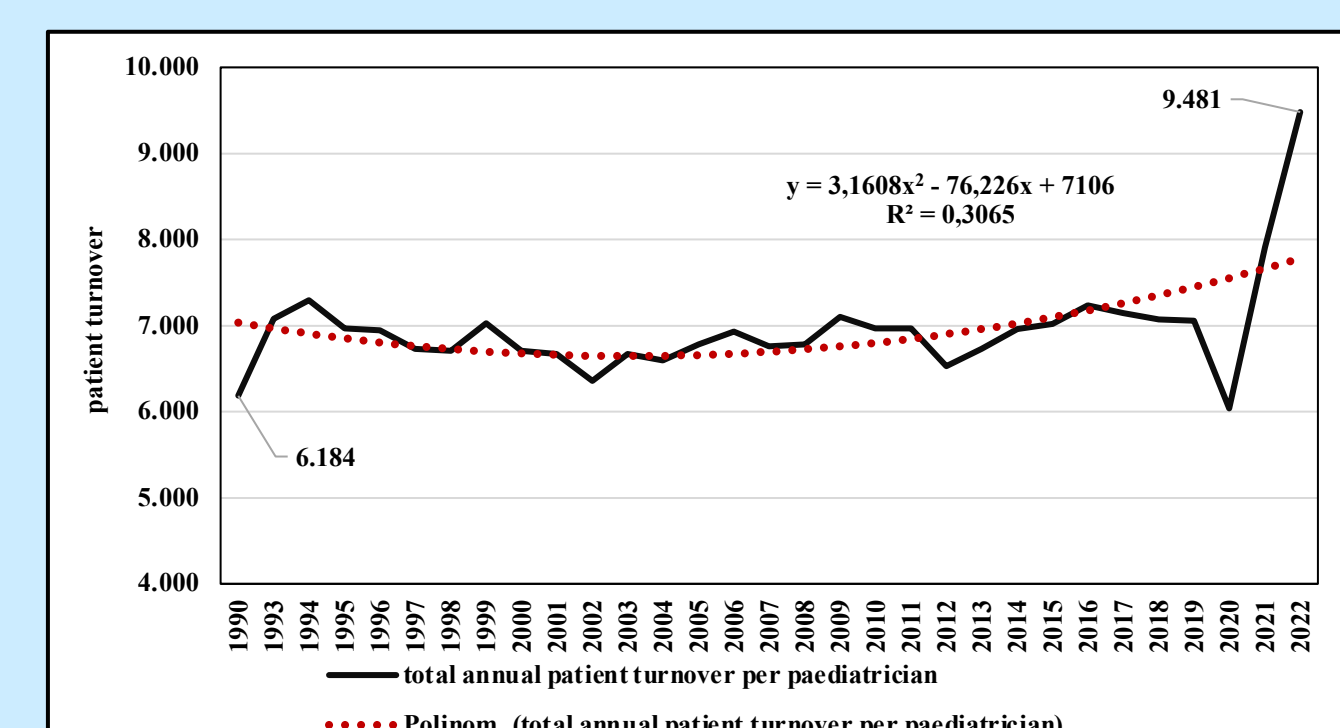


Figure 8.
Annual patient turnover per paediatrician Hungary (1990-2022)

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