

DIFFERENCES IN DEMAND OF DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN PATIENTS IN HUNGARY'S DENTAL TOURISM

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OBJECTIVES

Our aim was to assess a dental service provider's utilization by domestic and foreign patients, the changes of prices and the purchased hotel services in Hungary since the start of the Covid pandemic.

METHODS

The closed questions concerned sociodemographic factors and access to health and other services. Quantitative cross-sectional analysis and non-random sampling were used (N=1350). We used the data of 2019 as the starting date. Descriptive statistics (mean, absolute, and relative frequency) were used for data management and processed using Microsoft Excel. The use of services was grouped according to ordinal and nominal independent variables / explanatory variables (gender, age group, income group).

RESULTS

During the pandemic, besides the low number of Hungarian patients, the amount of Swiss, Belgian patients have decreased (-35%), while the number of northern Italian and Austrian patients have increased (39%). Examination of foreign patients have decreased by 67% in the assessed dental service provider. While 25% of Hungarian patients came for tooth extraction, 55% for implants, 30% for removable dentures, 30% for non-removable dentures, foreigners rather chose oral surgery (10%), implants (5%), removable ceramic (35%) and other dentures (30%). During the pandemic, the price of ceramic dentures rose by 11.9%, removable ceramic dentures by 9.6%, oral surgery and bone replacement by 3.6%. Hungary has a price difference of 31% between the average prices in the sample and those used in the European Union, 49% in the case of bone replacement and 51% in the case of minor oral surgery.

CONCLUSIONS

Despite the border closure due to Covid, dental traffic has increased. This is because dentists accept status checks made by in other countries by a mutual agreement. Foreign insurance companies are offering increasingly favourable insurance terms. It is still worth coming to Hungary for dental treatment, considering the accommodation and travel costs.

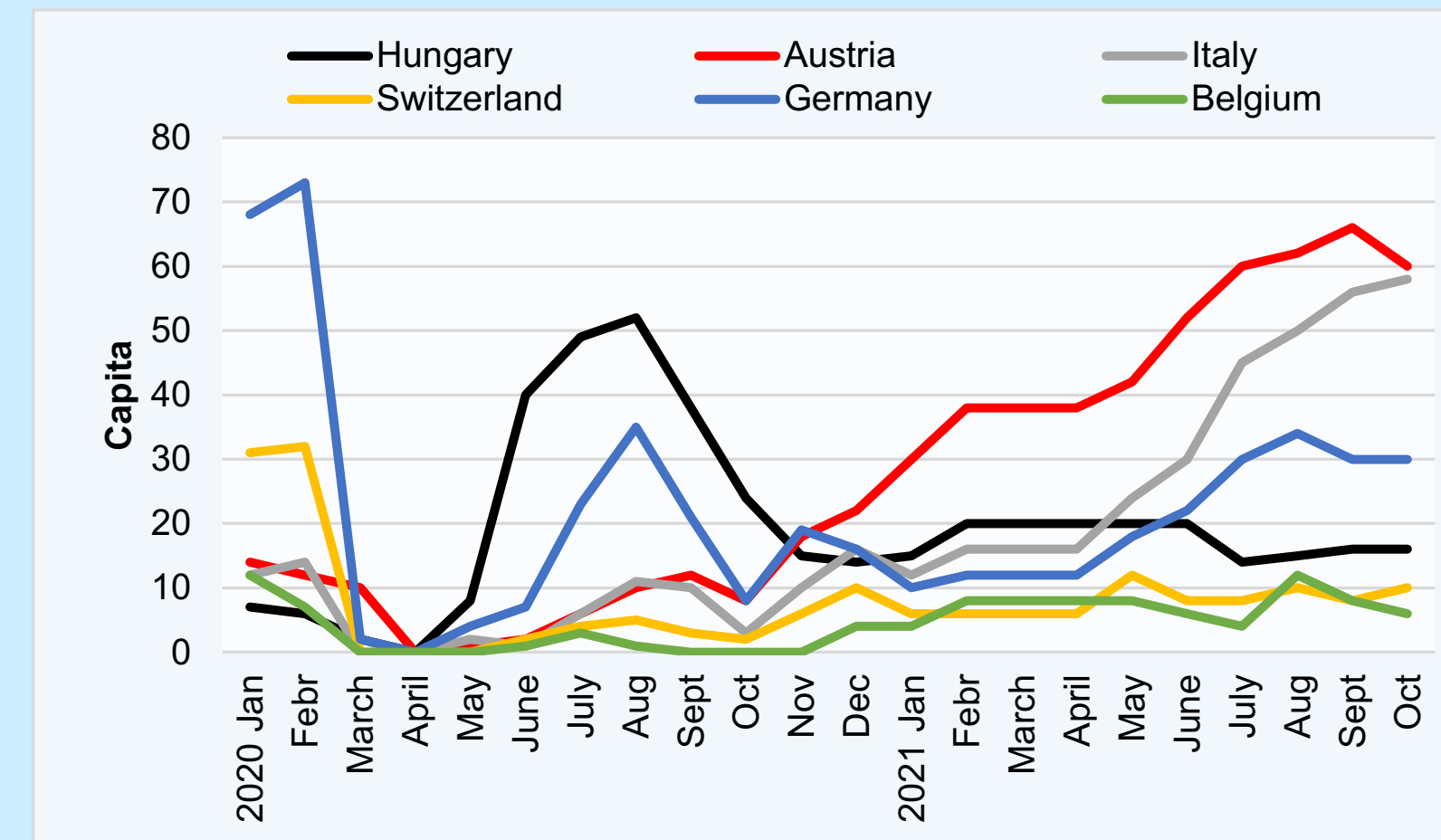


Figure 1.
Number of Hungarian and foreign patients who asked for a routine dental exam between 01. 2020 – 10. 2021 in Hungary

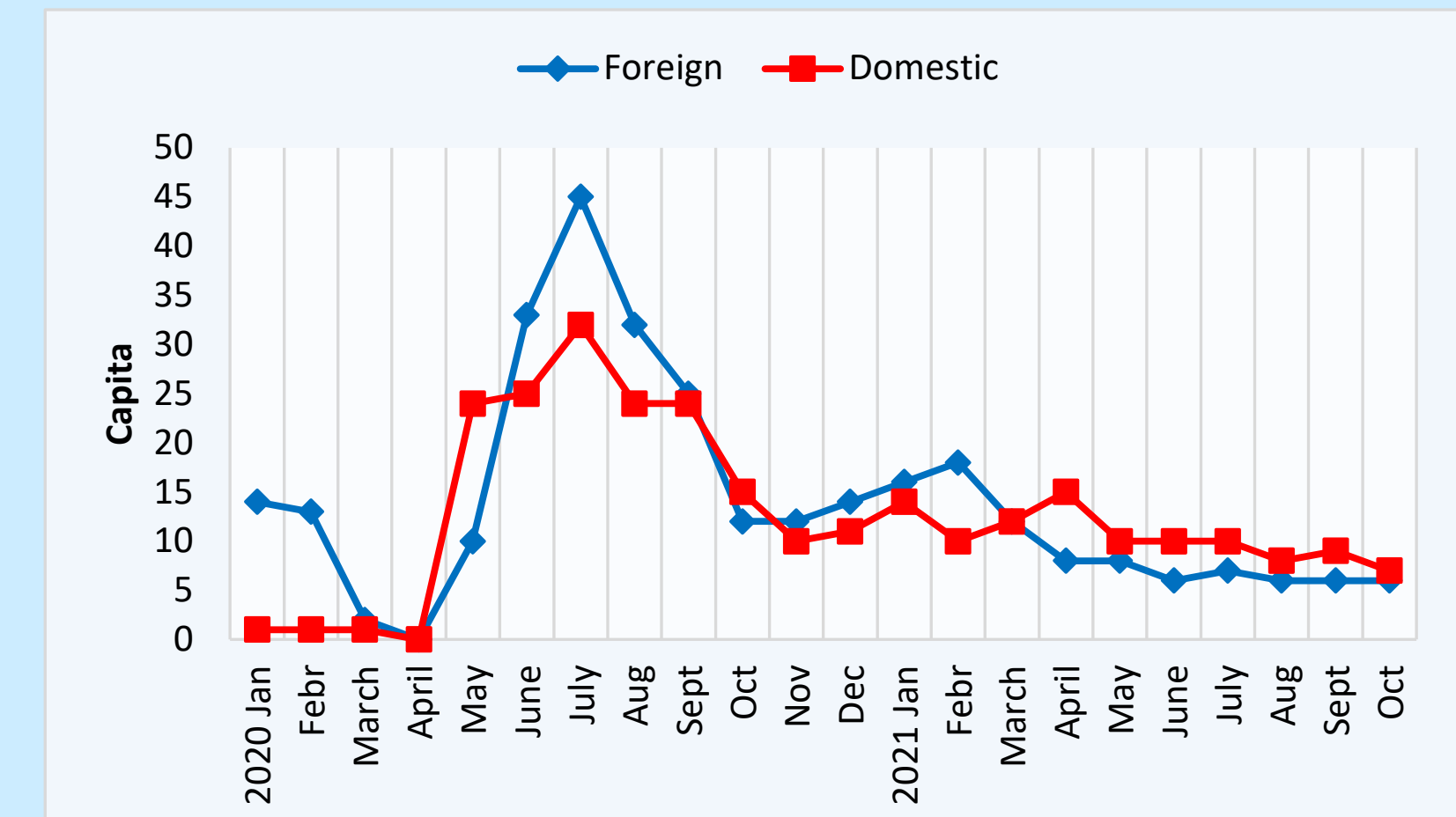


Figure 2.
Differences in the number of Hungarian and foreign patients who were treated between 01. 2020 – 10. 2021 in Hungary

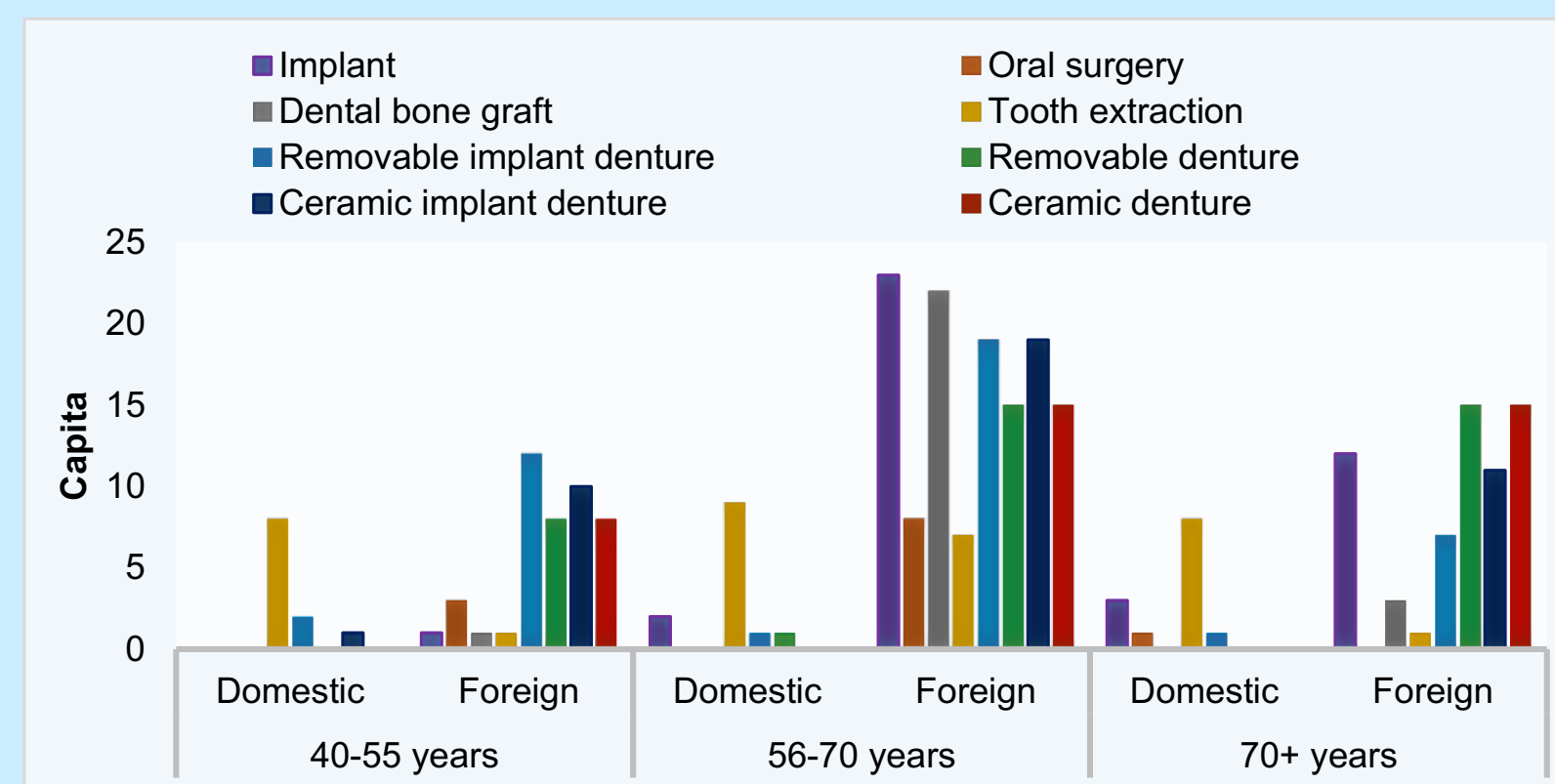


Figure 3.
Dental care utilization among different age groups in Hungary

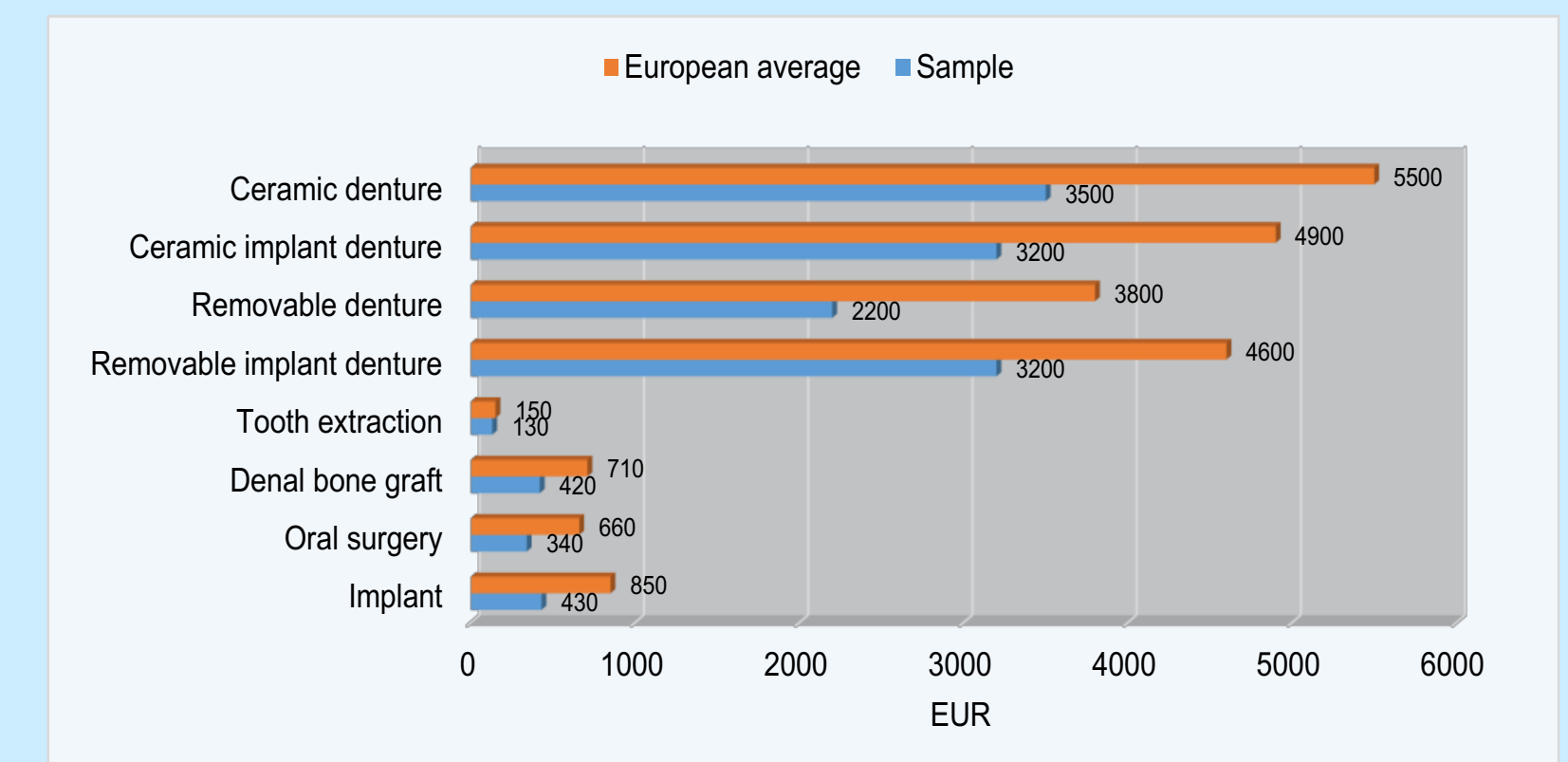


Figure 4.
Average prices of dental care treatments – difference between European average price and our findings

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