

COST AND PATIENTS ACCESS ANALYSIS TO REIMBURSED MEDICINES FOR MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS IN BULGARIA

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INTRODUCTION

- ✓ Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a chronic, autoimmune disease of the central nervous system, affecting more than 700,000 people in Europe [1].
- ✓ The pharmaceutical interventions aimed at delaying the progression of disease, measured by Expanded Disability Status Scale (EDSS) and number of relapses, may help to reduce the economic burden of the disease [2].
- ✓ Differences in reimbursement decisions exist due to the uncertainty regarding the medicines effectiveness and cost [3].
- ✓ Budget impact of the disease-modifying agents is significant especially for developing countries [4].

AIM OF THE STUDY

- ✓ To assess the Bulgarian health-insured patients' access to medicines for MS, examine the trend in public expenditures for reimbursed medicines for multiple sclerosis (MS) in Bulgaria from 2016 to 2019 and predict the future costs.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

- ✓ Data on the cost of reimbursed medicines for MS were collected retrospectively from the National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF) for the period 2016-2019.
- ✓ MS medicines were systematized according to ATC code and INN.
- ✓ Reimbursed pharmacotherapy costs were analyzed per year.
- ✓ The expenditures were extrapolated using TREND function for the next 3-year period 2020-2022. Patients access was assessed through analysis of the available medicines for MS in the Positive Drug List (PDL) and officially published pharmacotherapeutic guidelines.

RESULTS

- ✓ Most of the approved medicines for MS in the European Union are included in the Bulgarian PDL: interferons (interferon beta 1a, interferon beta 1b, peginterferon beta-1a), selective immunosuppressants (teriflunomide, fingolimod, natalizumab, alemtuzumab, ocrelizumab, cladribine), other immunostimulants (glatiramer acetate), other immunosuppressants (dimethyl fumarate).

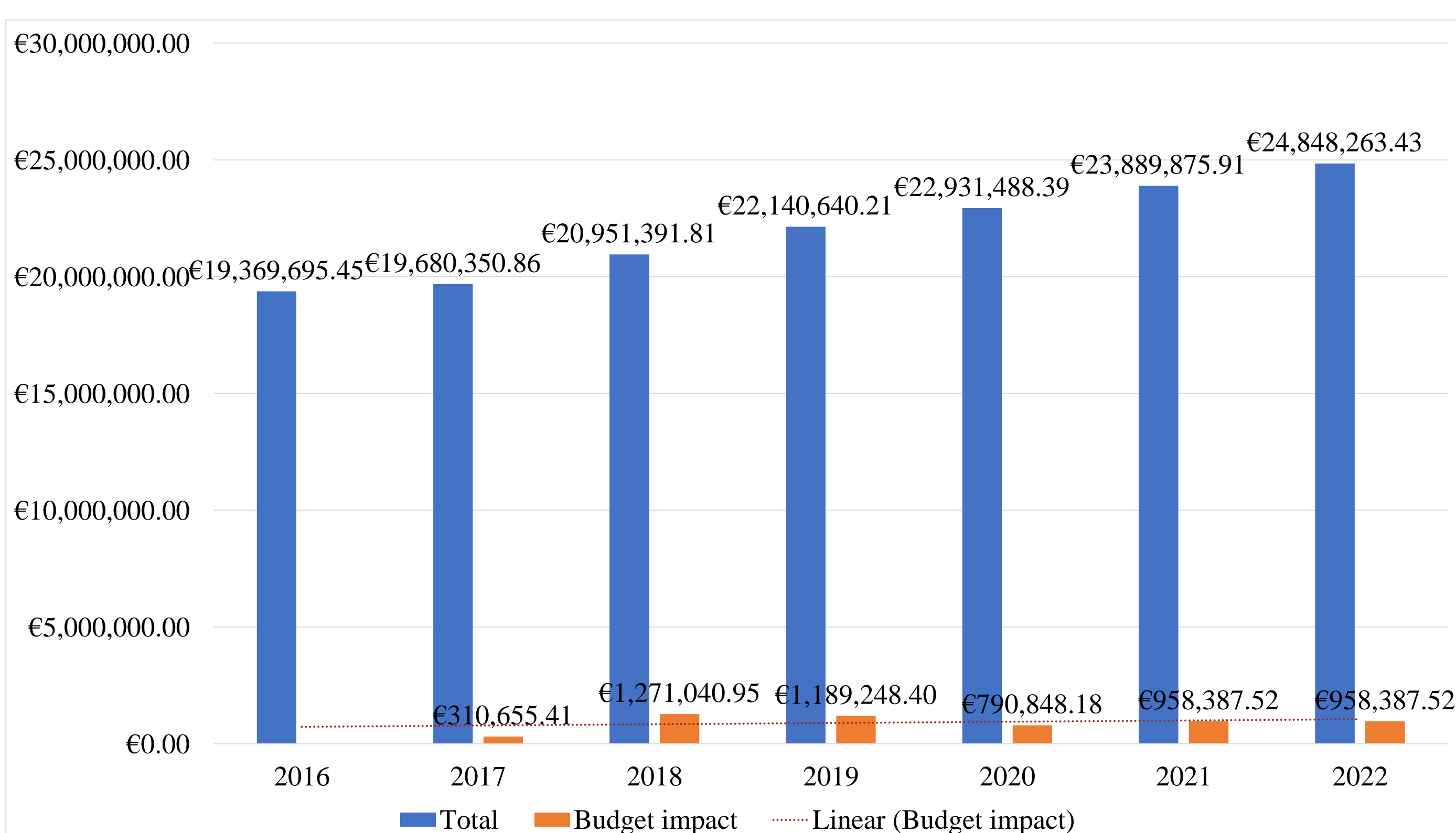


Figure 1. Budget impact for the period 2016-2022

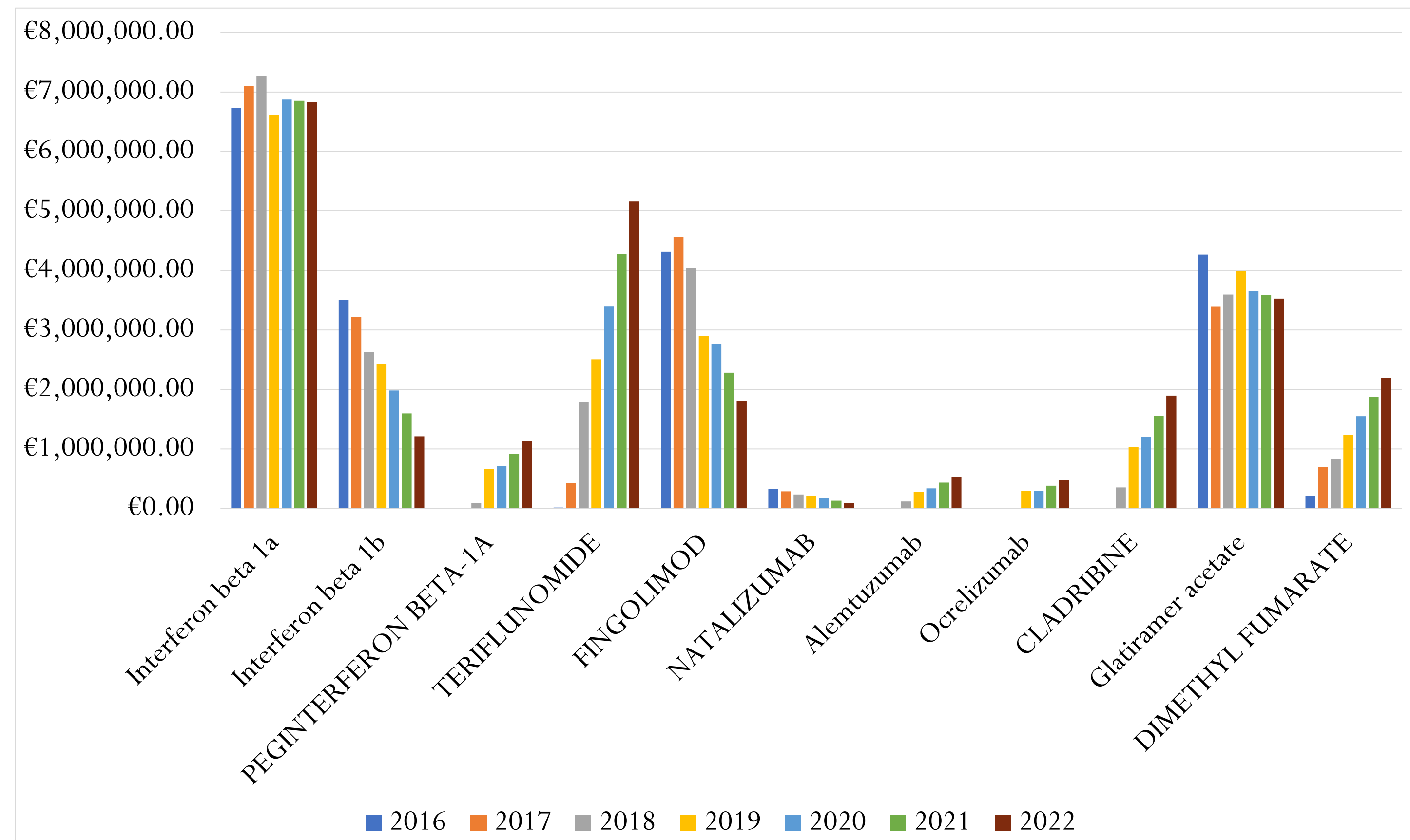


Figure 2. Pharmacotherapy costs for the period 2016-2022 by INN

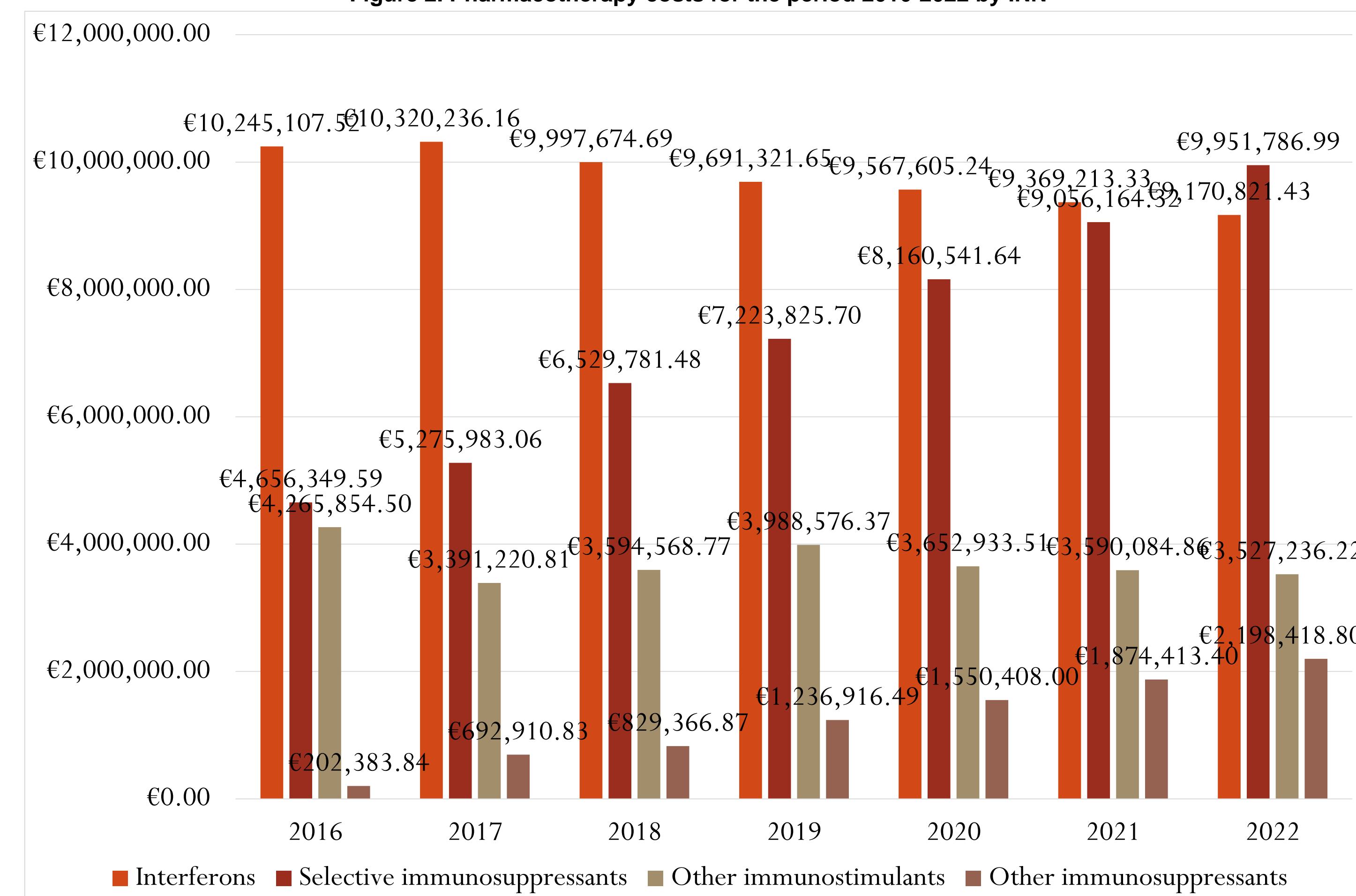


Figure 3. Pharmacotherapy costs for the period 2016-2022 by groups

- ✓ Ocrelizumab and alemtuzumab being fully reimbursed from 2019 and 2018, respectively.
- ✓ The total reimbursed pharmacotherapy cost showed an increasing tendency from € 19 369 695.45 in 2016 to € 22 140 640.21 in 2019, respectively (figure 1).
- ✓ Interferons (53% in 2016 to 37% in 2019) and immunostimulants (22% to 14%) relative share decreases, while immunosuppressants increases (25% to 49%) (figure 2 and 3).

CONCLUSION

- ✓ Bulgarian patients access to medicines for MS is ensured through adequate financial measures.
- ✓ The pharmacotherapy cost for MS increased in 2016-2019 as the trend is predicted to be the same for the next 3 years.

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