



State of Health in the EU Country Health Profiles: 2023 edition

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European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies

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The Country Health Profiles 2023: Same structure, new thematic section on mental health

1. Highlights

2. Health status

3. Risk factors

4. The health system

5. Health system performance

5.1. EFFECTIVENESS/QUALITY

5.2. ACCESSIBILITY

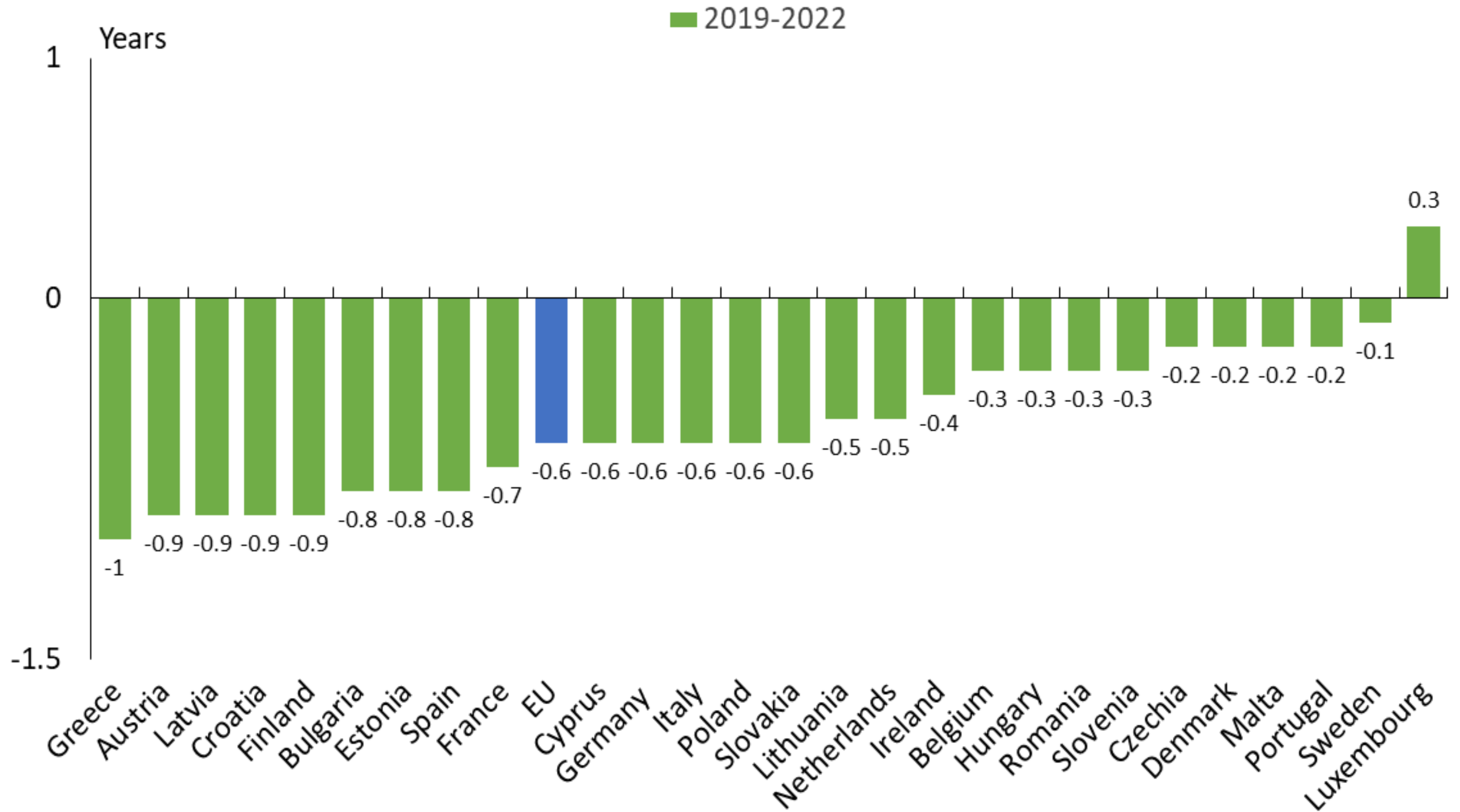
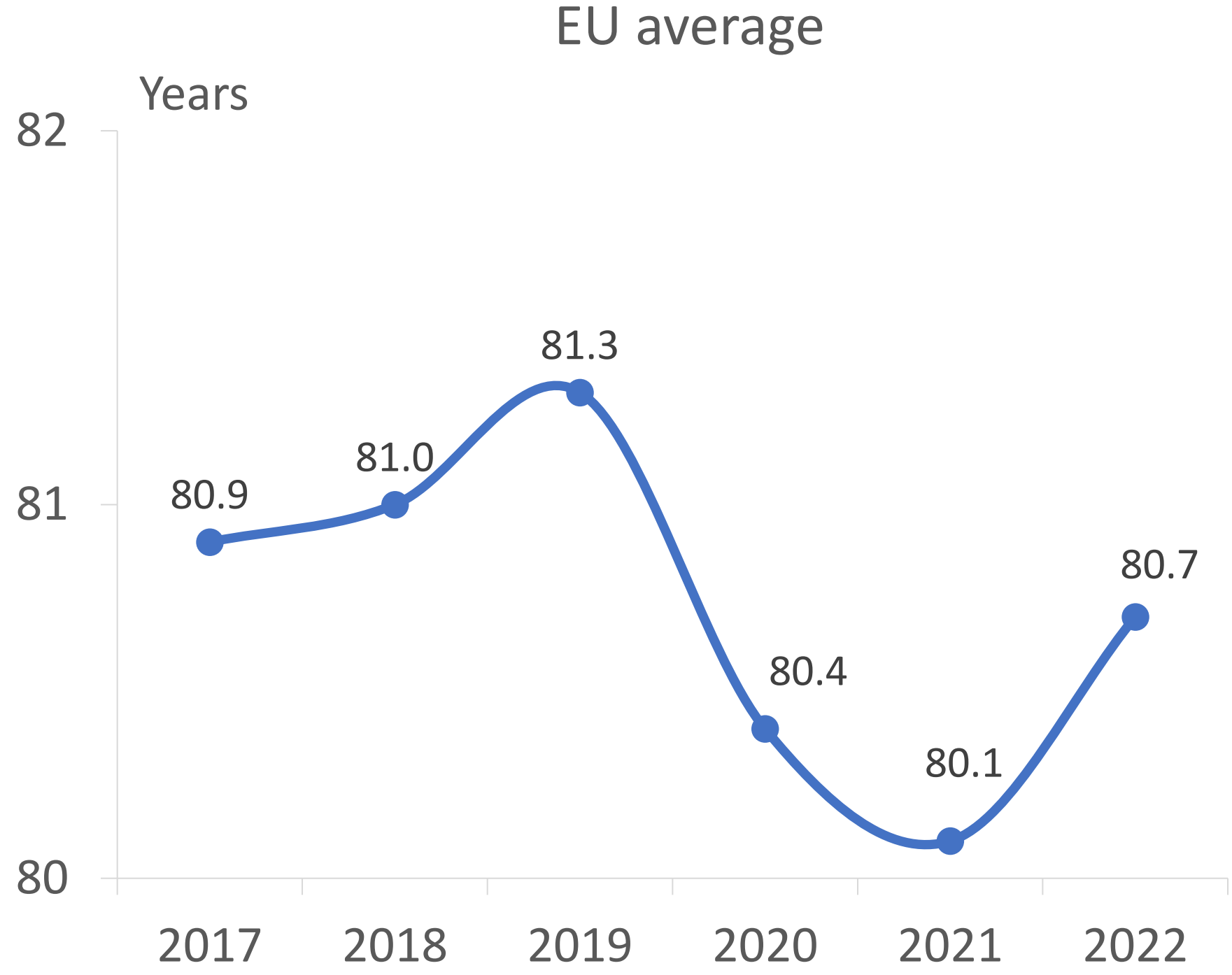
5.3. RESILIENCE

6. Spotlight on mental health

7. Key findings

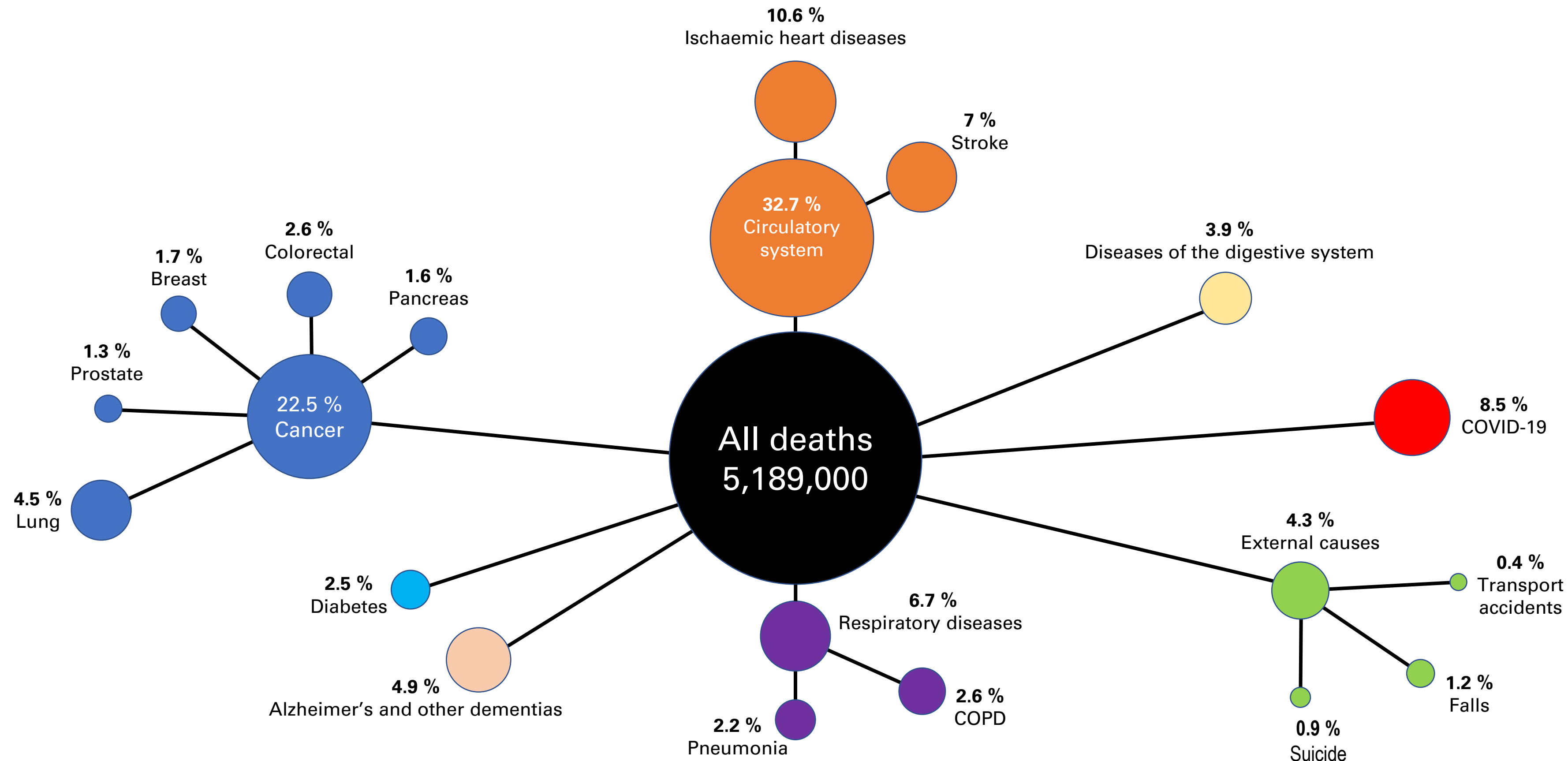


Life expectancy at birth fell greatly during the first two years of the pandemic, and had not recovered yet in 2022



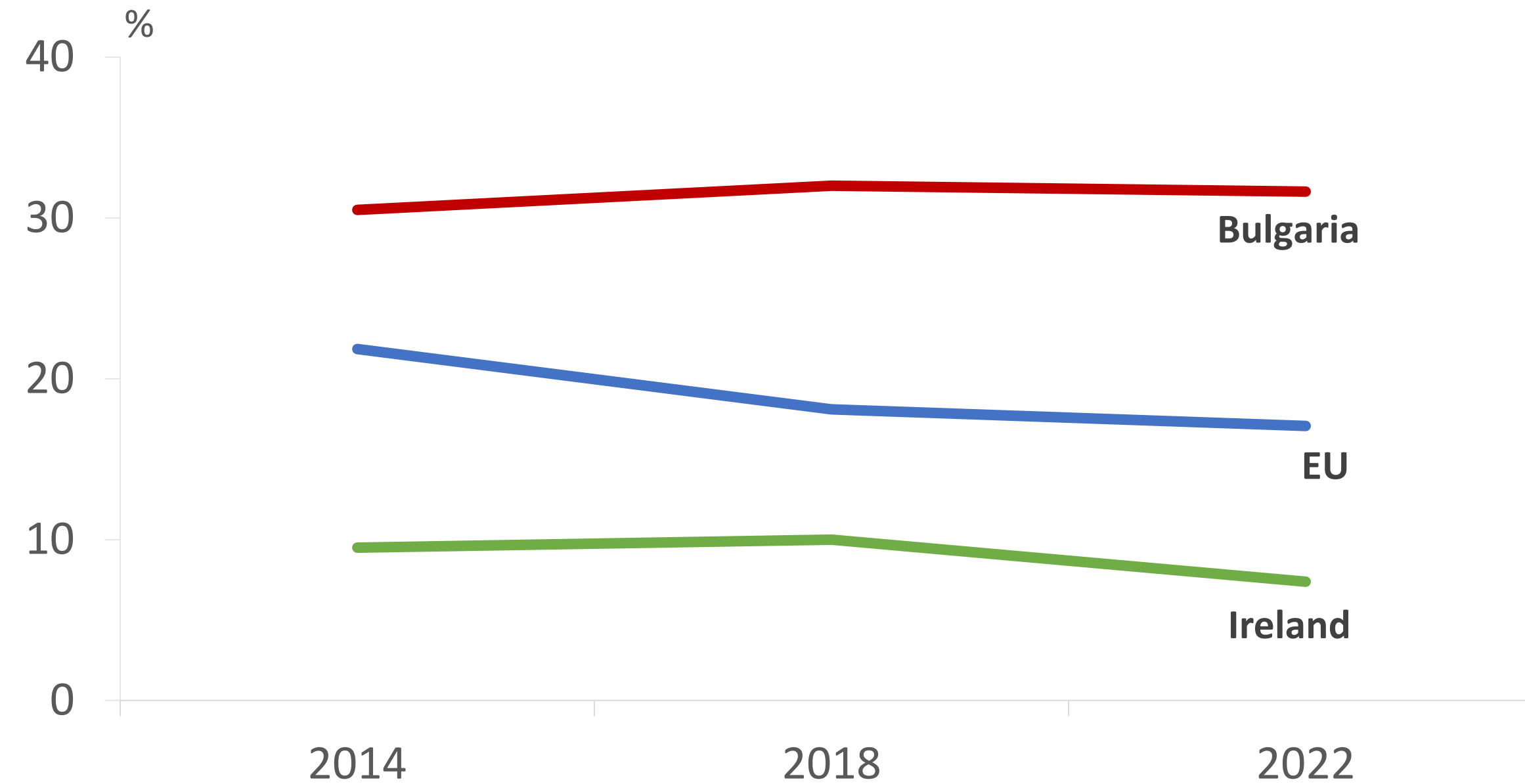
Source: Eurostat. Note: For Ireland, the difference in the second chart is between 2019 and 2021 (not 2022).

Circulatory diseases and cancer were the leading causes of death in 2020, but COVID-19 accounted for a large share of all deaths

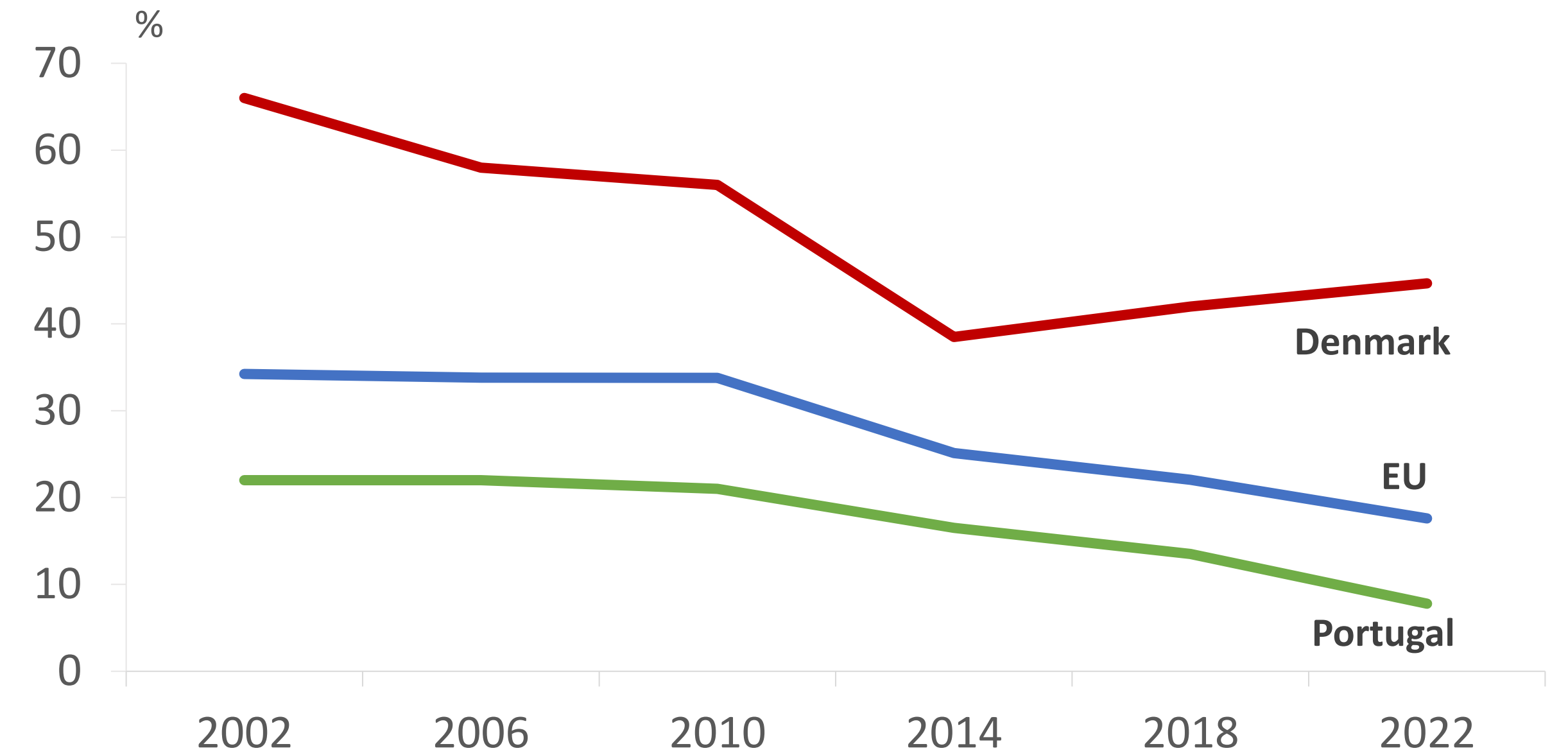


Good news: Adolescent smoking and binge drinking has continued to decrease after the pandemic

Share of 15-year-olds reporting smoking in the past month

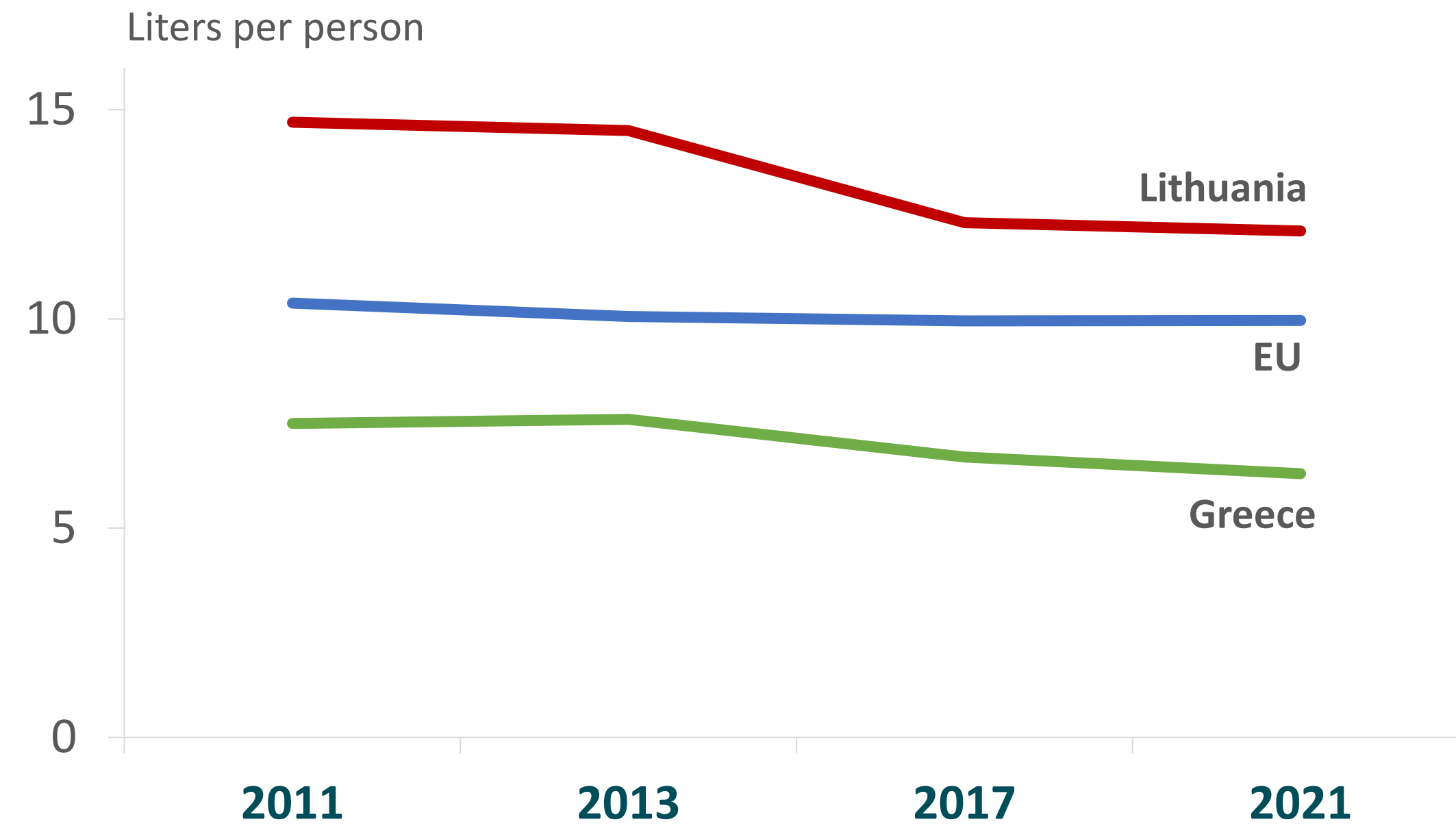


Share of 15-year-olds reporting having been drunk more than once in their life

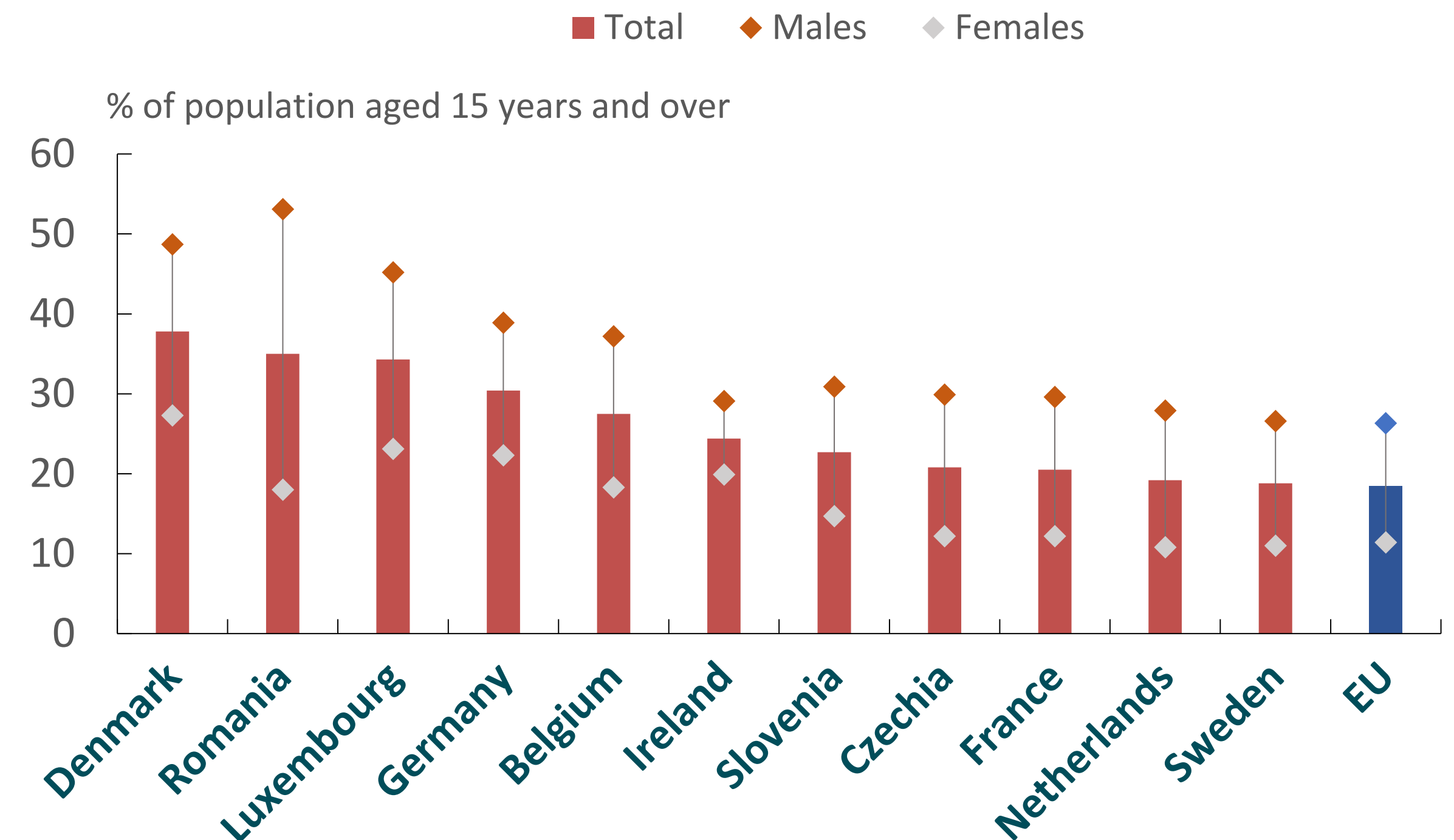


Overall alcohol consumption among **adults** has remained stable, but **heavy alcohol consumption** is a serious public health issue in many countries

Overall alcohol consumption

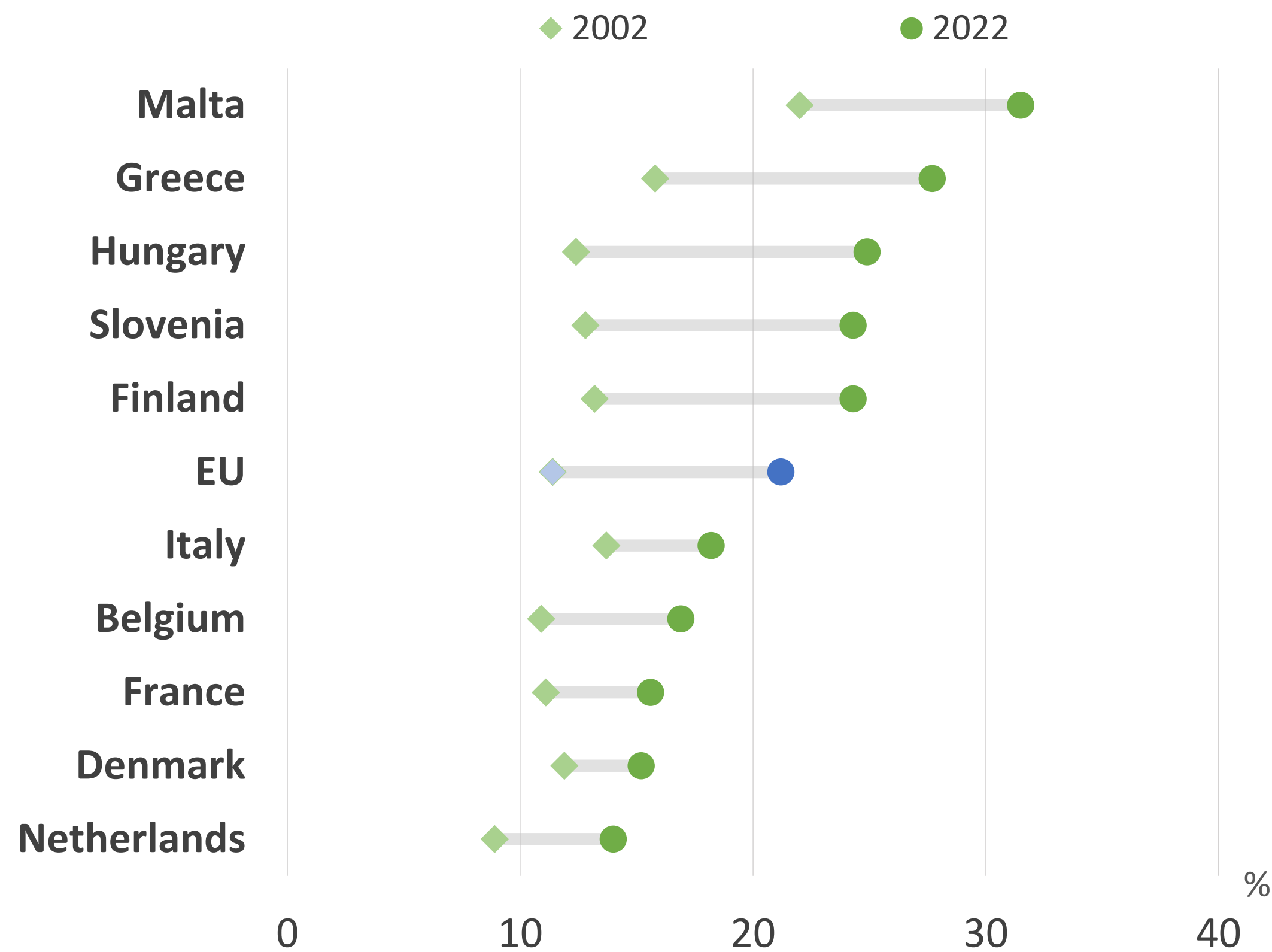


Share of adults reporting heavy episodic drinking



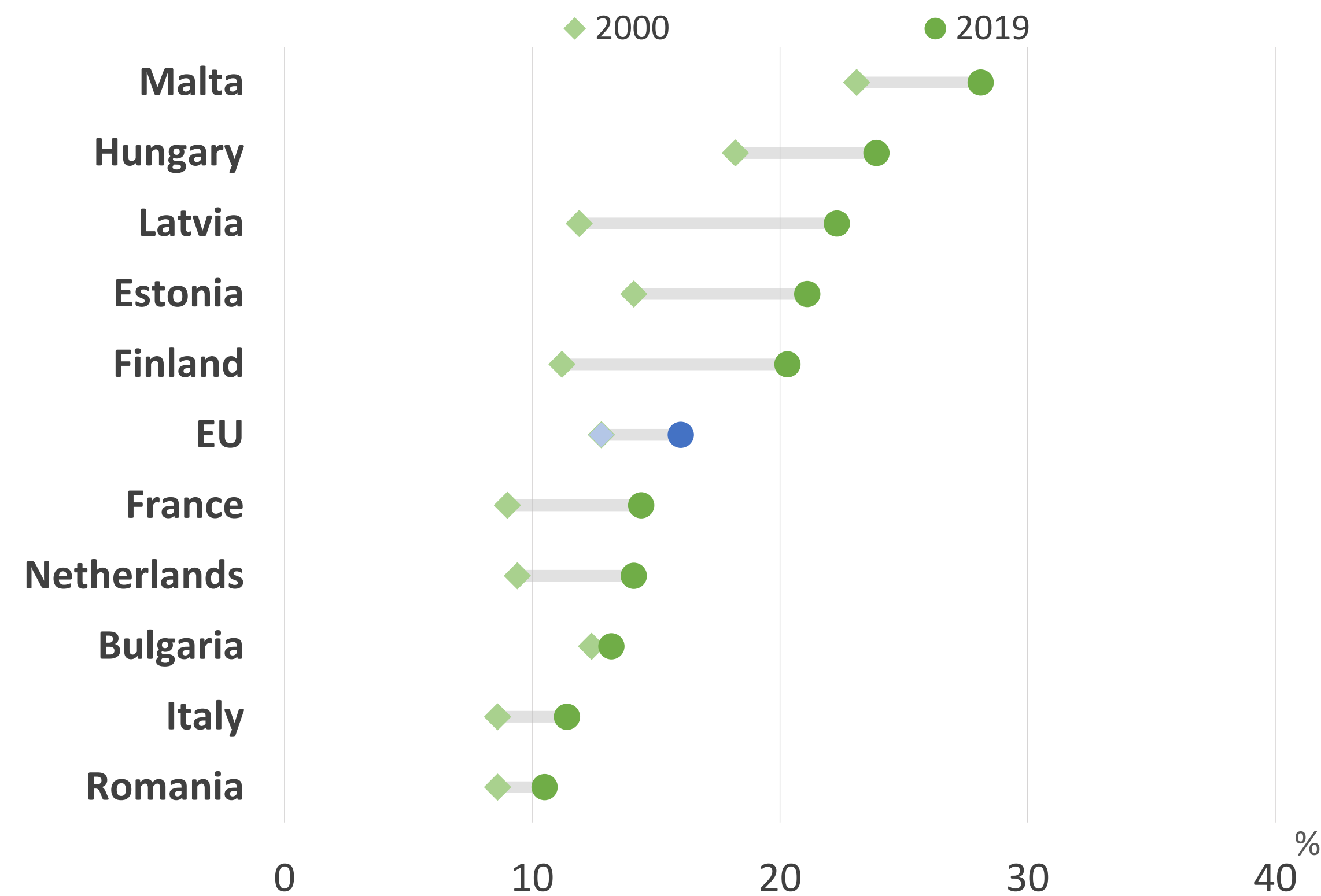
More bad news: Overweight and obesity continue to grow across EU countries

Overweight and obesity among 15-year-olds



Source: HBSC Survey

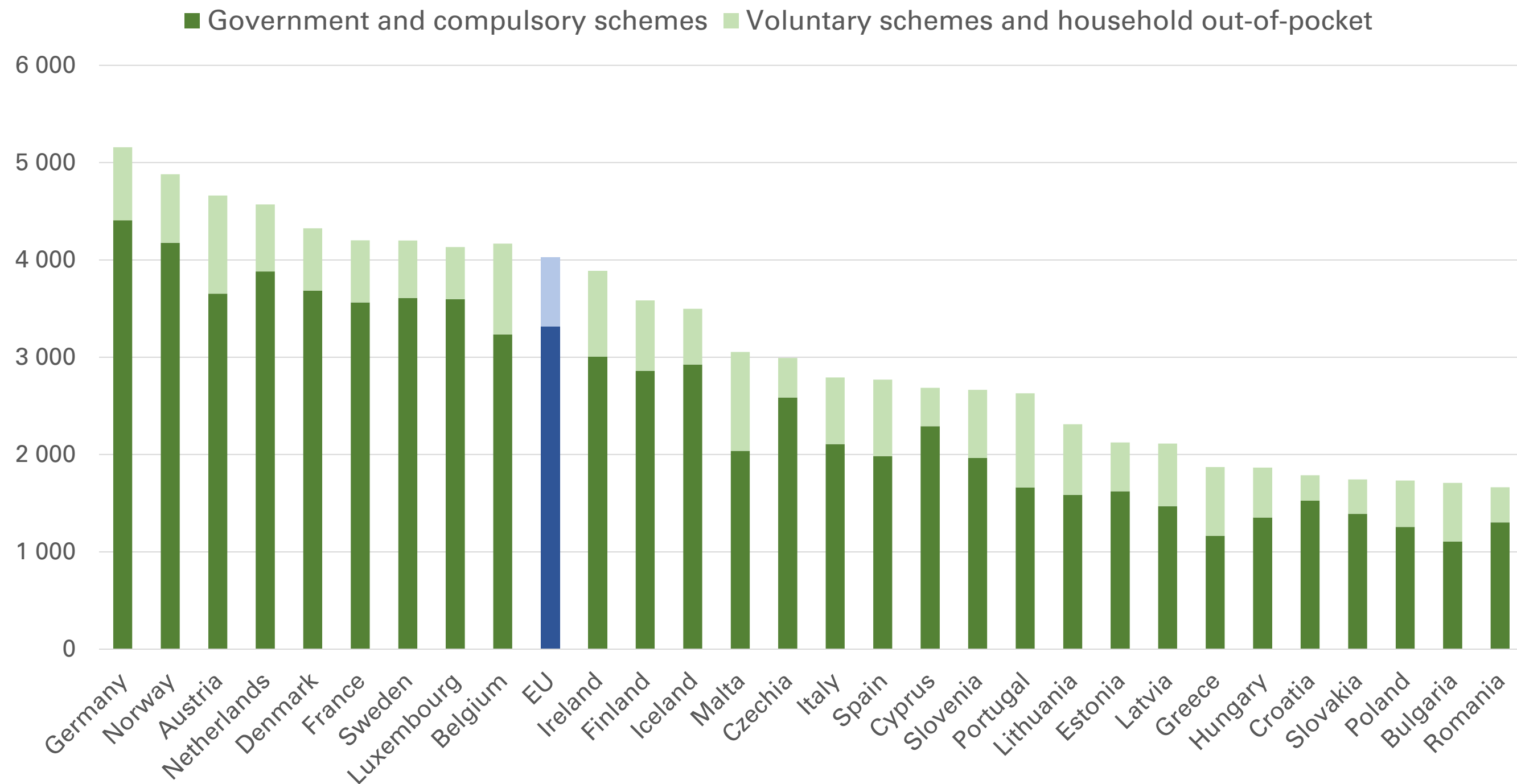
Obesity among adults



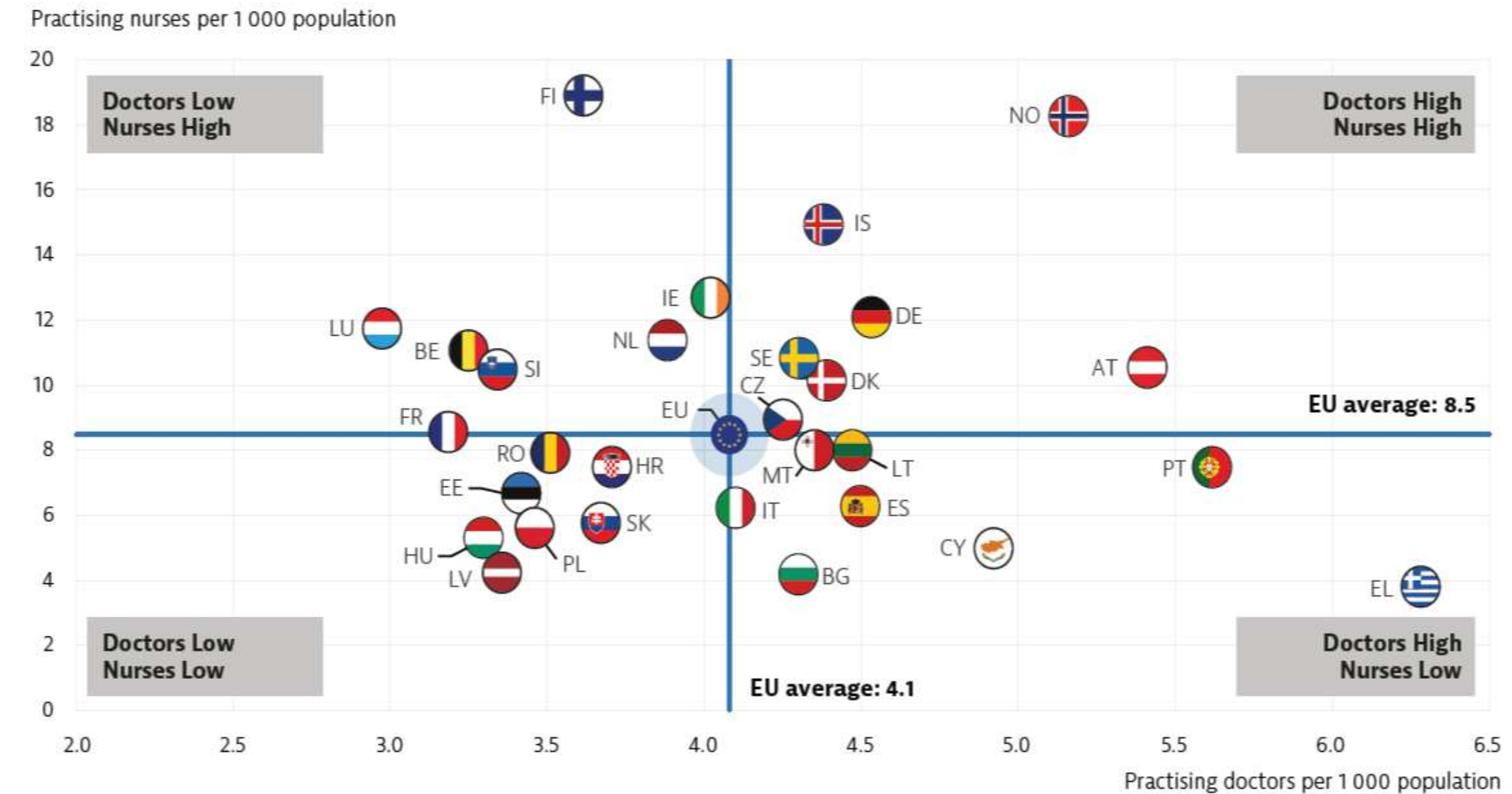
Source: Eurostat (EHIS 2019) and national surveys (2000)

The resources available to health systems across the EU are very different

Health expenditure per capita (EUR PPS), 2021



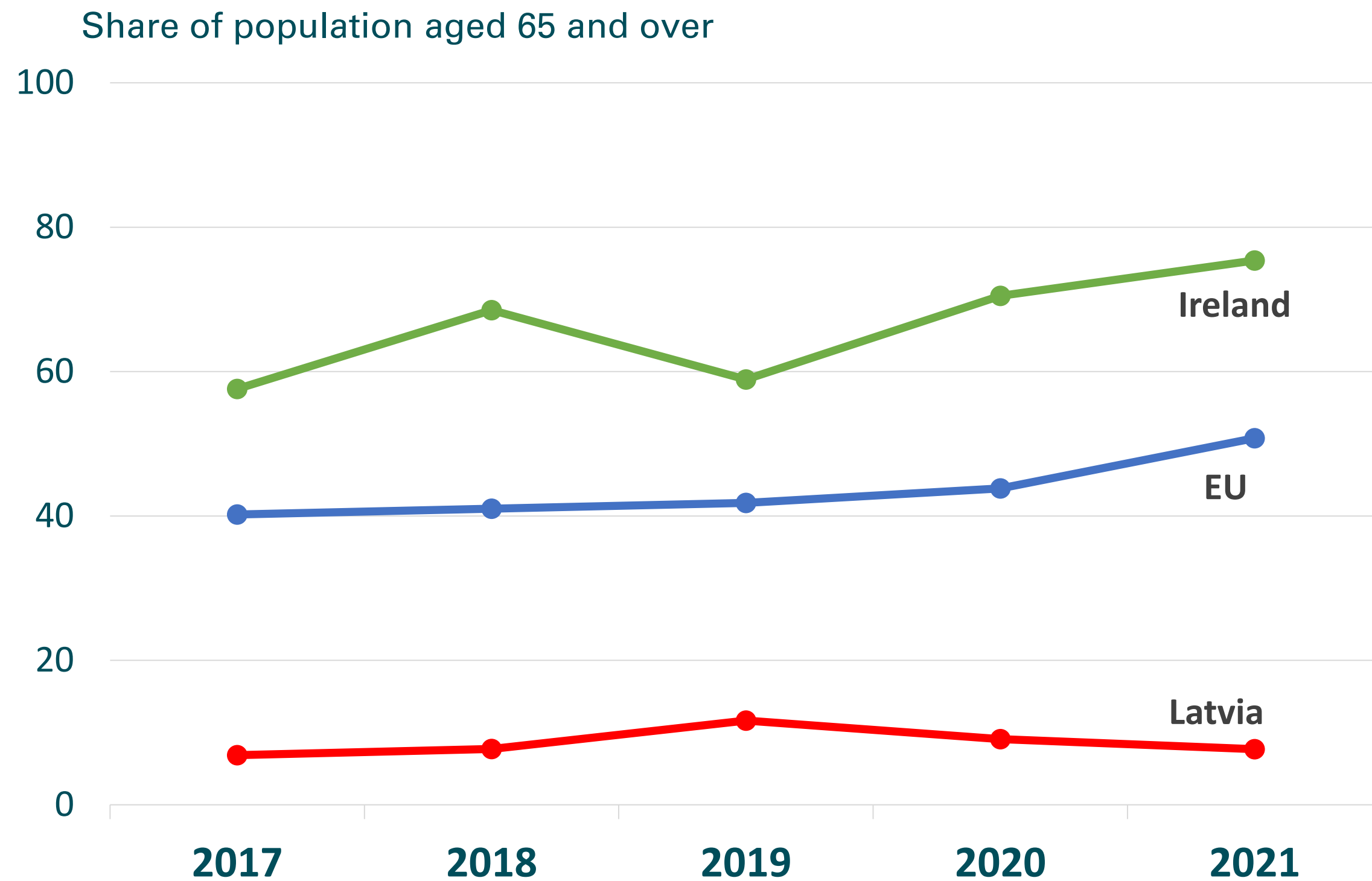
Endowments in health professionals



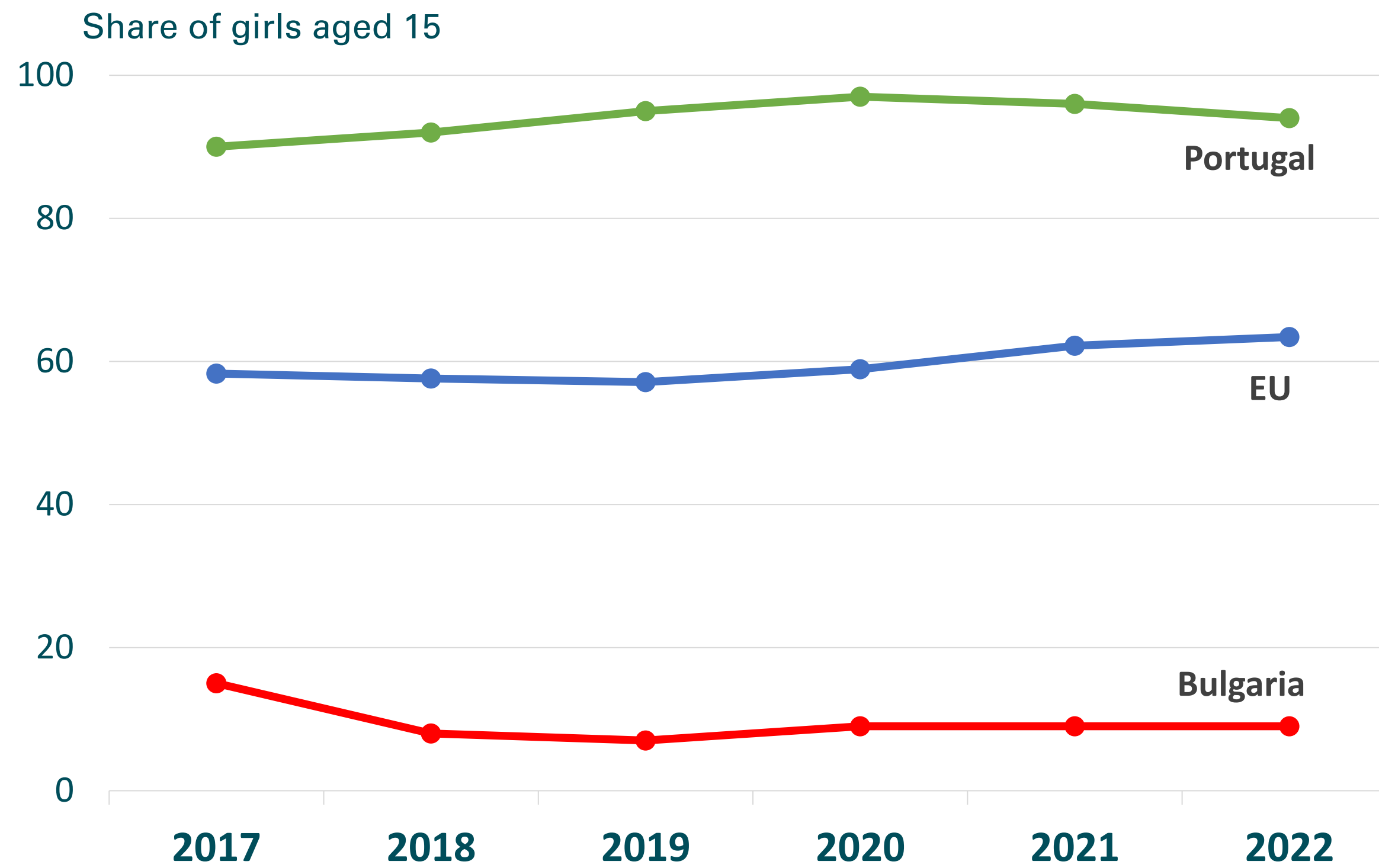
Note: In Portugal and Greece, data refer to all doctors licensed to practice, resulting in a large overestimation of the number of practising doctors (e.g. of around 30 % in Portugal). In Greece, the number of nurses is underestimated as it only includes those working in hospital.

Flu vaccination rates increased on average across the EU, while the rate for Human Papillomavirus (HPV) is stagnating

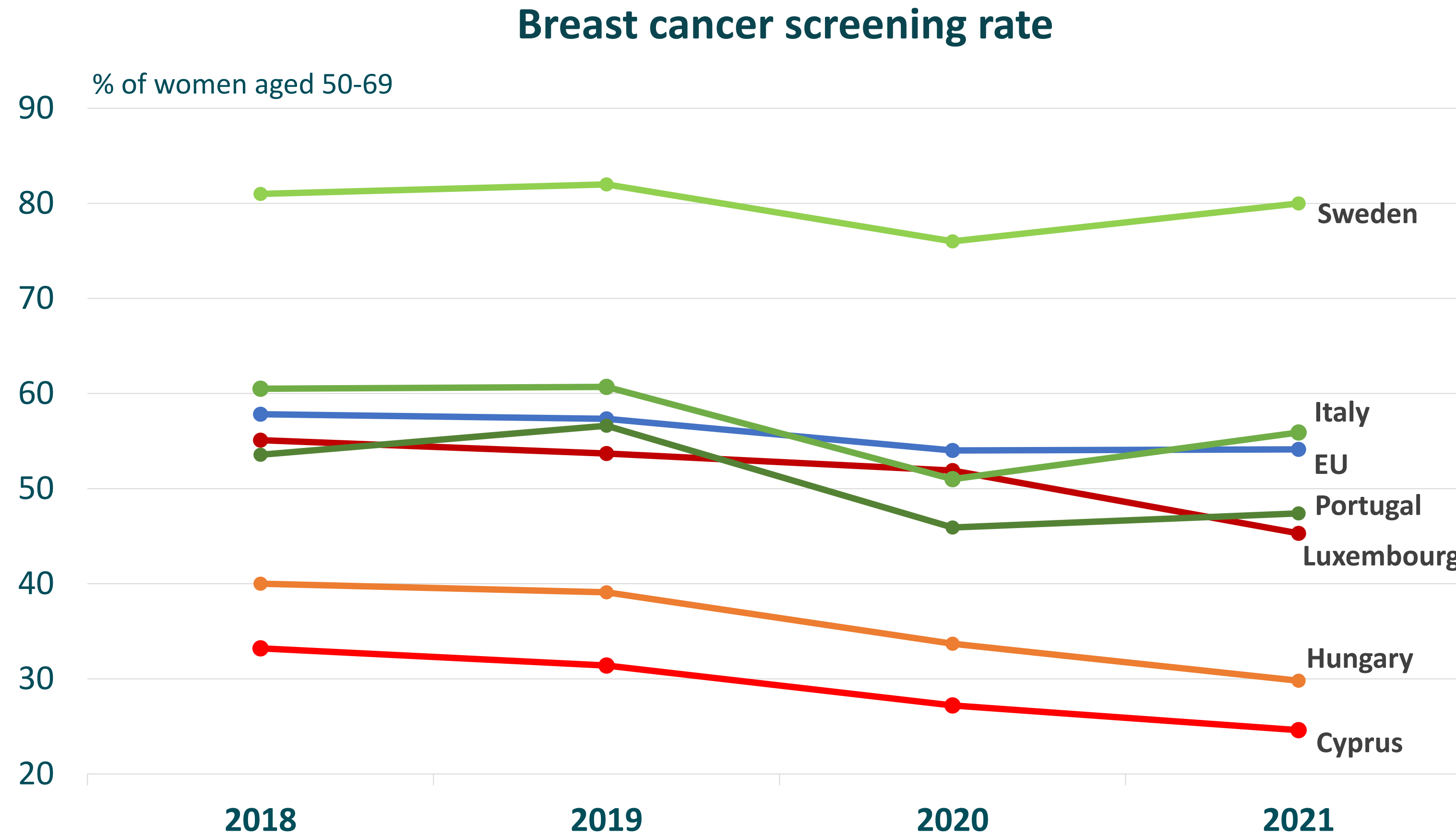
Influenza vaccination



HPV

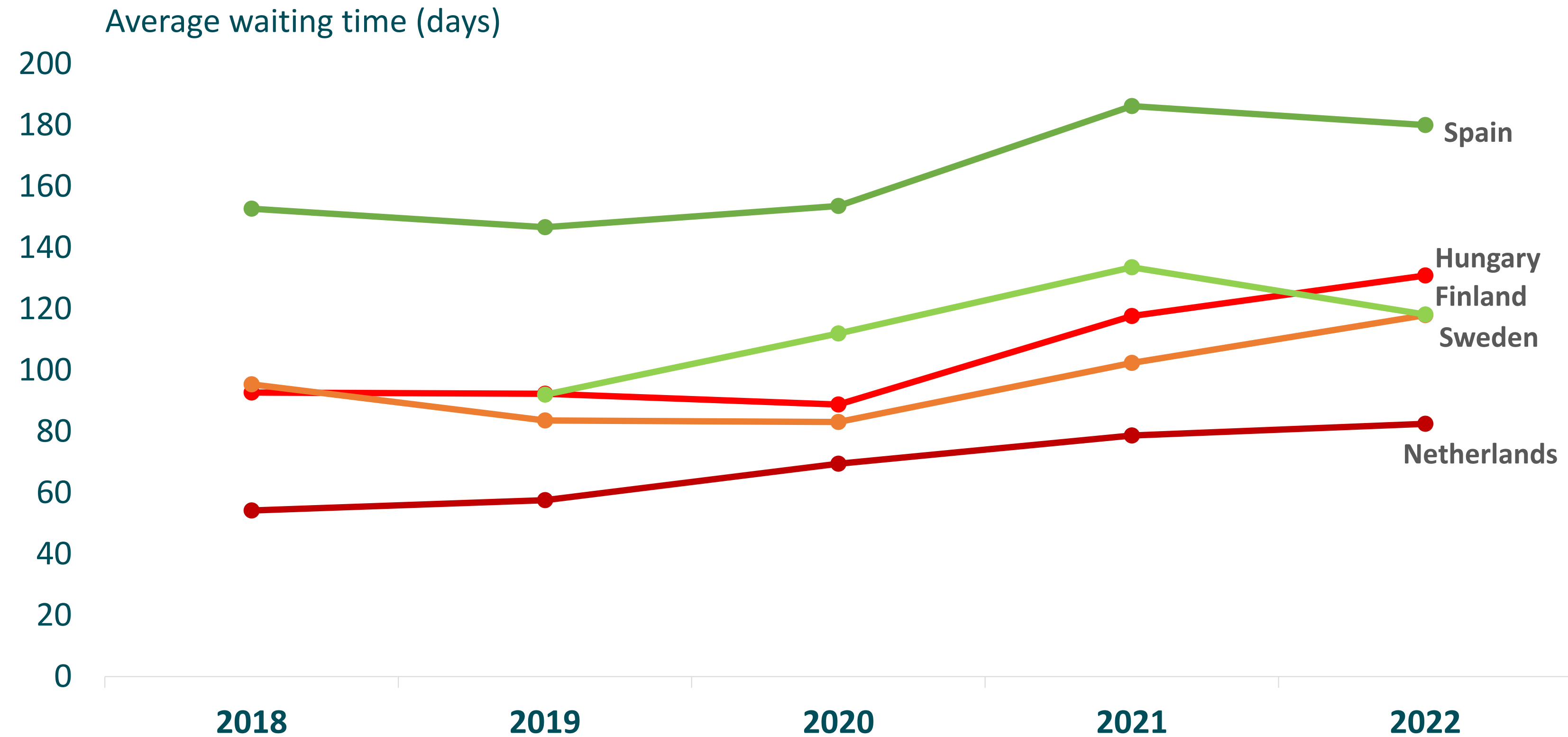


Cancer screening rates fell during the first two years of the pandemic, although they recovered at least partly in some countries in 2021



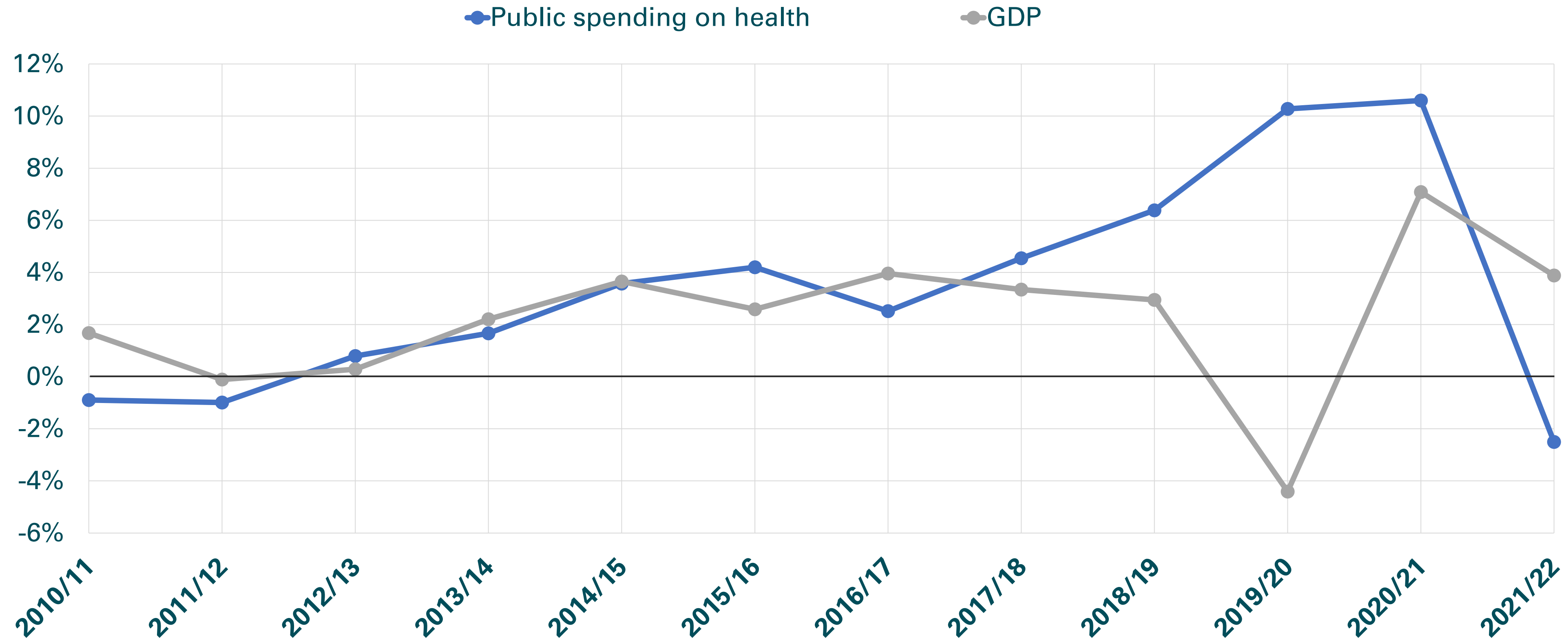
Waiting times for elective surgery in 2022 remained much higher than before the pandemic in several countries, although they started to fall in some countries

Hip replacement



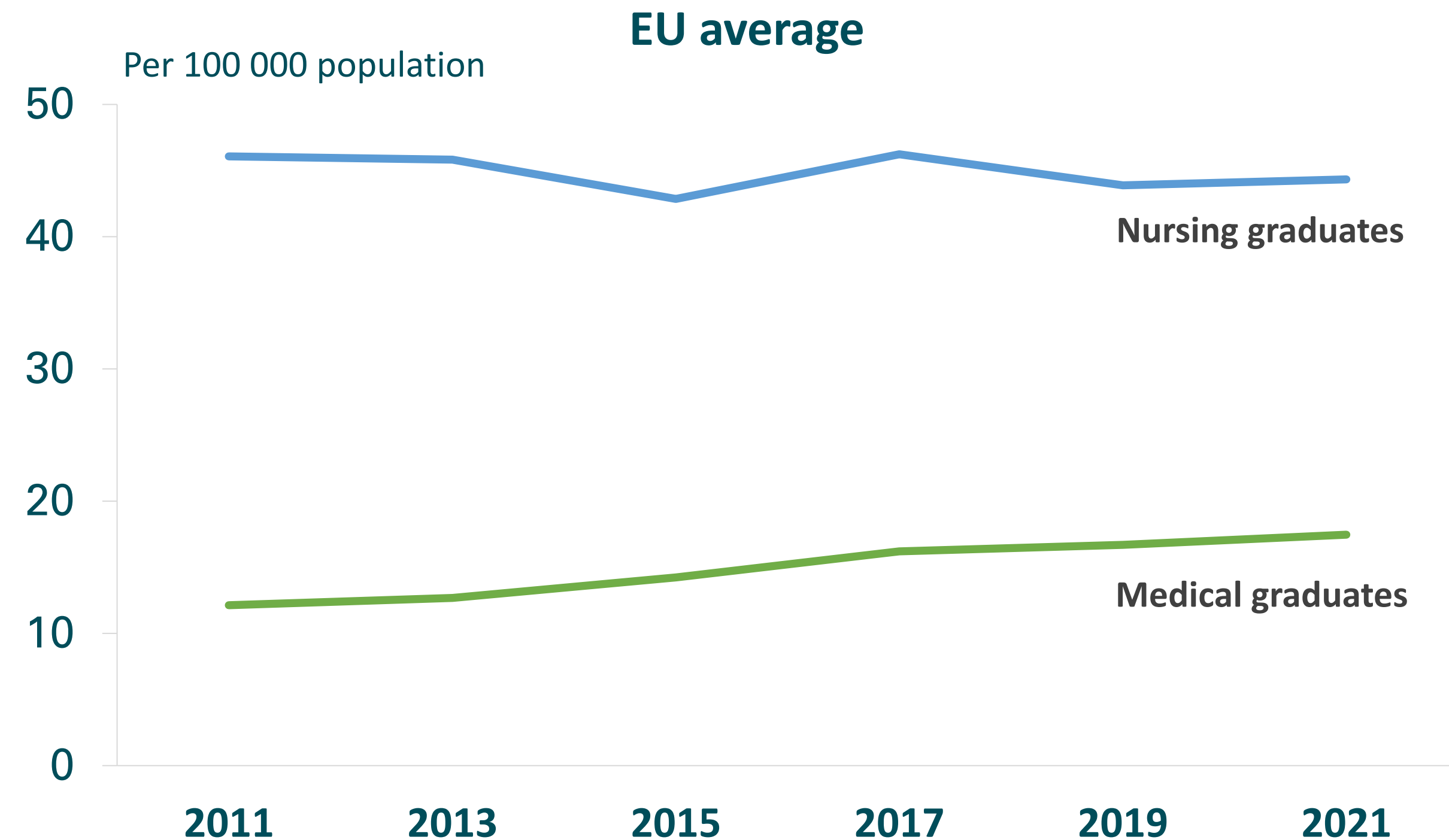
Public spending on health increased greatly in 2020 and 2021, but fell in 2022

Public spending on health and GDP, annual changes in real terms - EU average



Addressing health workforce shortages

**Good news on the training of new doctors
but nursing graduate numbers are stagnating**



Retention Policies

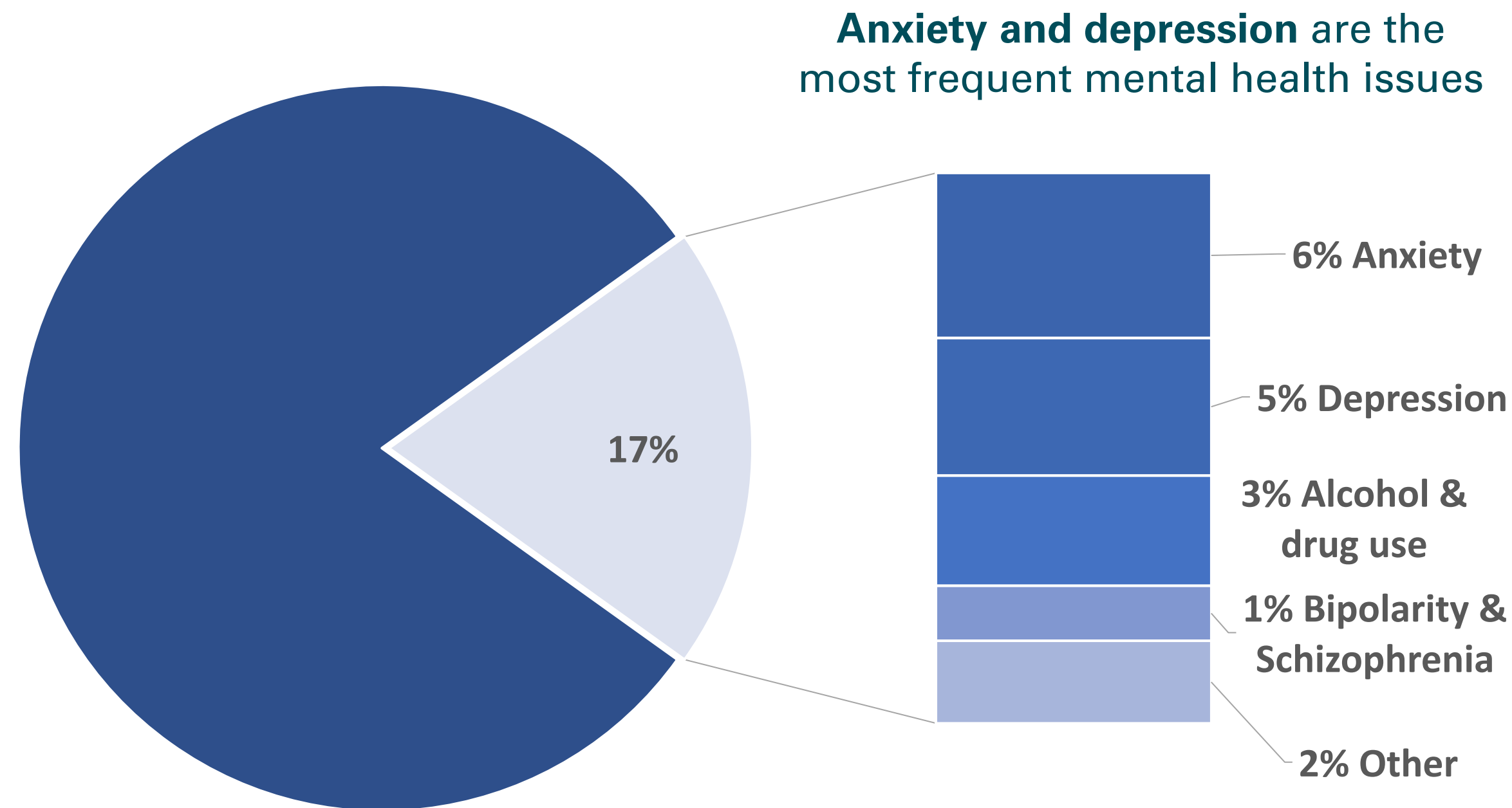


- ❖ Fair remuneration and salary levels, with options for rewarding performance
- ❖ Improving working conditions
- ❖ Supporting career development, task sharing & skill mix innovations, continuous professional education & training
- ❖ Supporting the mental and physical health of the health workforce

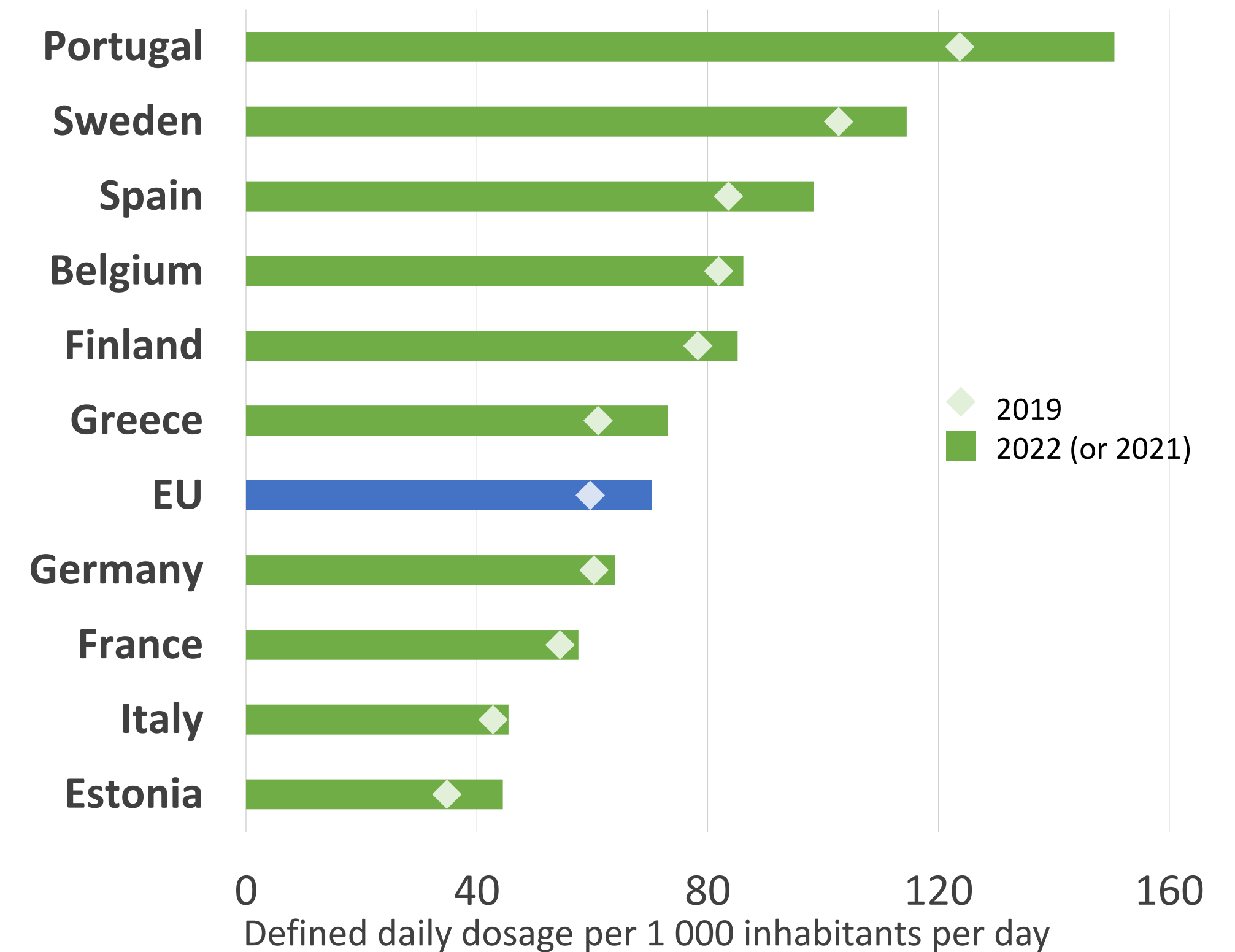
Spotlight on mental health

The burden of mental ill-health in the EU is large and growing

One in six people in the EU have a mental health condition



Antidepressant consumption increased significantly during the pandemic



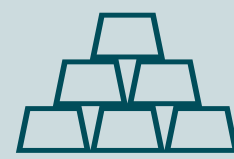
Key findings



COVID-19 had major impact across the EU, increasing deaths and **reducing life expectancy**. But we should not forget the **high burden of non-communicable diseases** and the need to **invest in prevention** to reduce risk factors and bolster population health.



Several countries still needed in 2022 to **tackle the back-logs** created by disrupted or postponed health services during the pandemic to ensure **timely access** to health services for all the population.



Investment in infrastructure, innovation and strategic reforms is necessary to build **health system resilience** and will rely on committed and sustained public expenditure in this sector.



The crisis triggered several strategies to **scale up the number of health professionals**, but there is a need for **further investment in the health workforce** to improve planning and increase recruitment and retention rates.



The prevalence of **mental health conditions** such as depression was substantial before the pandemic and there is evidence that it has **increased following the pandemic**. It is a reminder that **access to appropriate mental health services** is vital, as is investing in mental health **promotion and prevention**.

