

# ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE

## Antibiotics in the EU - Use & Perceptions

### CONSUMPTION OF ANTIBIOTICS

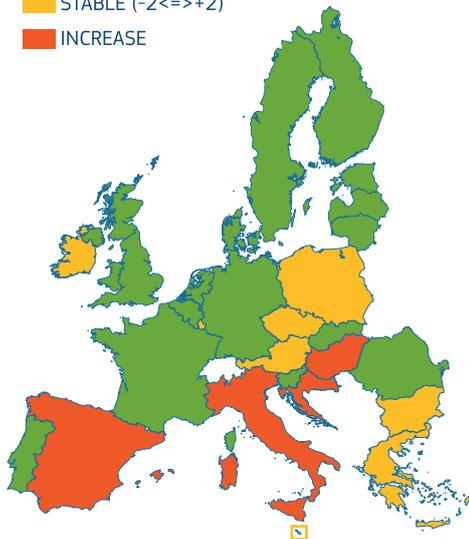
**Consumption has decreased** by 6 percentage points in the last seven years. Nevertheless, a **third of Europeans have taken antibiotics in the last 12 months.**

### CONSUMPTION BY COUNTRY

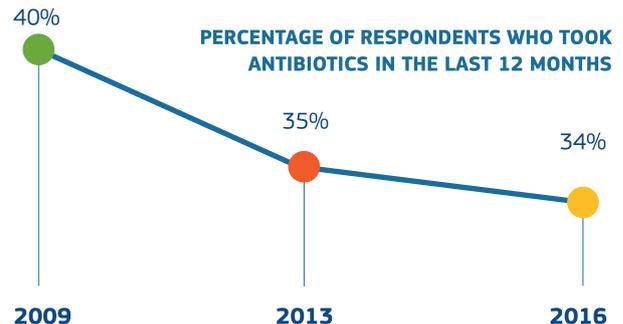
PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS WHO TOOK ANTIBIOTICS IN THE LAST YEAR BY COUNTRY AND EVOLUTION SINCE 2013

#### MAP LEGEND

- DECREASE
- STABLE (-2<=>+2)
- INCREASE



| Country | Percentage | Change since 2013 |
|---------|------------|-------------------|
| EU28    | 34         | ▼ 1               |
| AT      | 32         | ▼ 1               |
| BE      | 32         | ▼ 6               |
| BG      | 39         | ▲ 2               |
| CY      | 41         | ▼ 6               |
| CZ      | 33         | =                 |
| DE      | 23         | ▼ 4               |
| DK      | 23         | ▼ 8               |
| EE      | 32         | ▼ 3               |
| EL      | 38         | ▲ 2               |
| ES      | 47         | ▲ 9               |
| FI      | 31         | ▼ 5               |
| FR      | 39         | ▼ 5               |
| HR      | 36         | ▲ 4               |
| HU      | 34         | ▲ 5               |
| IE      | 44         | ▲ 1               |
| IT      | 43         | ▲ 7               |
| LT      | 35         | ▼ 4               |
| LU      | 41         | ▼ 2               |
| LV      | 31         | ▼ 8               |
| MT      | 48         | =                 |
| NL      | 20         | ▼ 8               |
| PL      | 28         | ▲ 2               |
| PT      | 33         | ▼ 5               |
| RO      | 38         | ▼ 9               |
| SE      | 18         | ▼ 6               |
| SI      | 25         | ▼ 3               |
| SK      | 35         | ▼ 6               |
| UK      | 35         | ▼ 6               |



**A majority of countries (16) have shown a decrease in consumption since 2013.** However:

- in Spain, the proportion of those taking antibiotics has increased by 9 percentage points and by 7 in Italy.
- The largest decreases are found in Romania (-9), Latvia, Denmark and the Netherlands (-8).

Use of antibiotics is **higher among those with low levels of education (39%) and in worse economic circumstances (44%).**

The vast majority **obtain antibiotics from their health care provider (93%),** although 4% still consume them without a prescription or use those left over from a previous prescription (2%).

### KNOWLEDGE

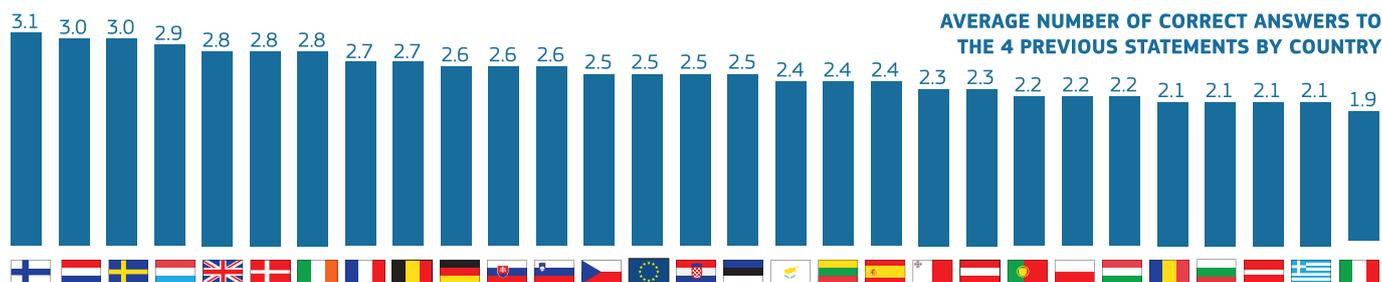
Large numbers of Europeans are **unaware** that:

- 1- antibiotics are ineffective against viruses (57%).
- 2- antibiotics are ineffective against cold and flu (44%).

However, most Europeans are **aware** that:

- 3- unnecessary use of antibiotics makes them become ineffective (84%).
- 4- you should only stop taking antibiotics after taking all of the prescribed treatment (82%).

The European countries where the **level of knowledge** is **highest** are **Finland, the Netherlands and Sweden** and the **lowest** levels are found in **Latvia, Greece and Italy**.



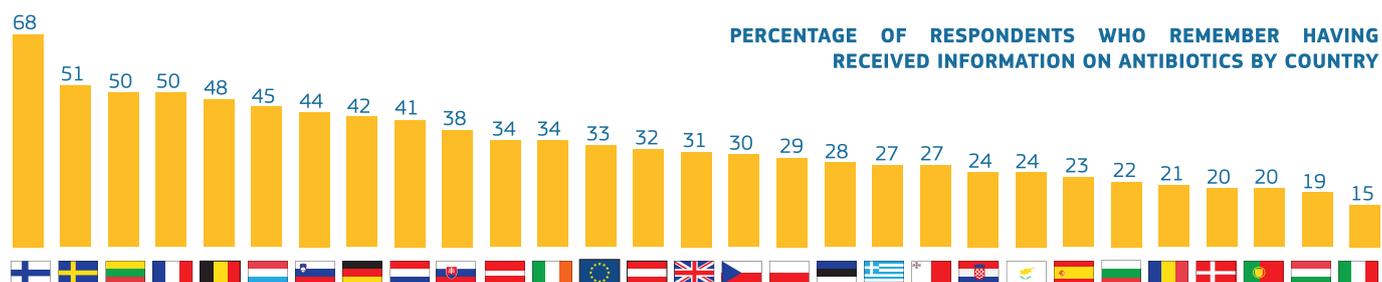
### CONSUMPTION DECREASES AS KNOWLEDGE INCREASES

Those who are aware of the 4 previous statements on antibiotics are less likely to have consumed them (31%) than those who are aware of only one statement (40%) or none at all (35%).

### AND KNOWLEDGE INCREASES AMONG THOSE WHO HAVE RECEIVED INFORMATION ON ANTIBIOTICS

Those who say they have received information on antibiotics are significantly more likely to be aware of the 4 previous statements (34% compared with 19% of those who did not receive information).

## HOWEVER, INFORMATION ON THE CORRECT USE OF ANTIBIOTICS HAS ONLY REACHED A THIRD OF EUROPEANS



Europeans express interest in **receiving (more) information on a range of topics**, such as:

- information on the **medical conditions** for which antibiotics are used (26%),
- **antimicrobial resistance** (23%),
- the links between **human and animal health** and the environment (23%),
- how to **use antibiotics** (22%).

## ONE HEALTH - USE OF ANTIBIOTICS IN AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

More than half of Europeans (56%) agree that **sick animals have the right to be treated** with antibiotics.

Just over a **third of Europeans (37%) say that they are aware of the EU ban** on the use of antibiotics on farm animals to stimulate growth, while the majority either say that they are not aware or did not know (63%).

## SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Europeans receive information on antibiotics from their **doctor (32%)** or **different media** such as television advertisements (27%) or television news (26%).

**Doctors are the most trustworthy source** of information (84%), followed by **pharmacies** (37%) and **hospitals** (19%).

## POLICY RESPONSE

**Europeans are in favour of action at all levels to tackle antibiotic resistance.**

Europeans are aware that action is needed at all levels, with 35% supporting action at **global and EU level**. 28% think that action should be taken at **national/regional level**, whereas 19% consider it should be tackled at **individual level or within the family**.