

Health Security in the EU



COVID-19 lessons learned and looking
ahead to ensure a stronger EU Health
Security Framework

**Health systems resilience
and security:
Learning from government
responses to the pandemic**

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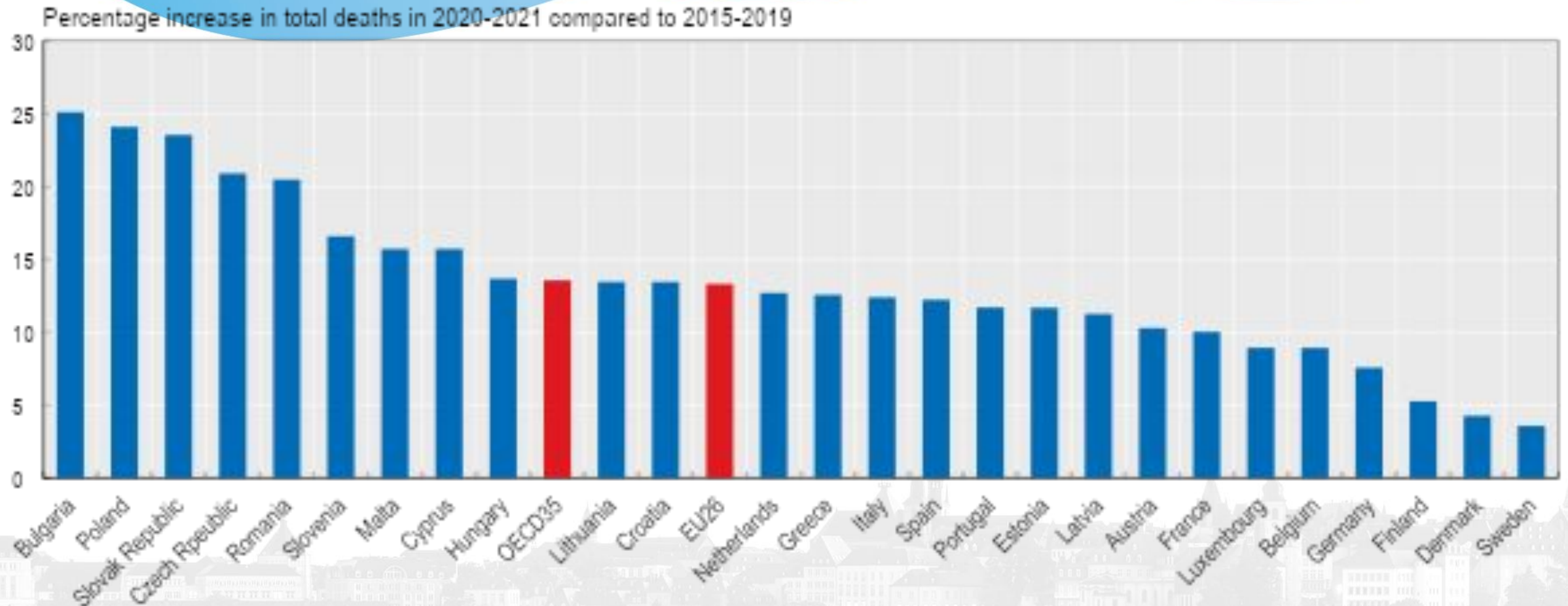
22 Nov 2022



OVERVIEW

- Lessons learnt for health system resilience and security
 - Population vulnerabilities and inequities are exacerbated
 - Resources, data, and agility allow comprehensive responses
 - Trust and a whole-of-government approach underlie a successful response
 - International co-operation needs to be strengthened

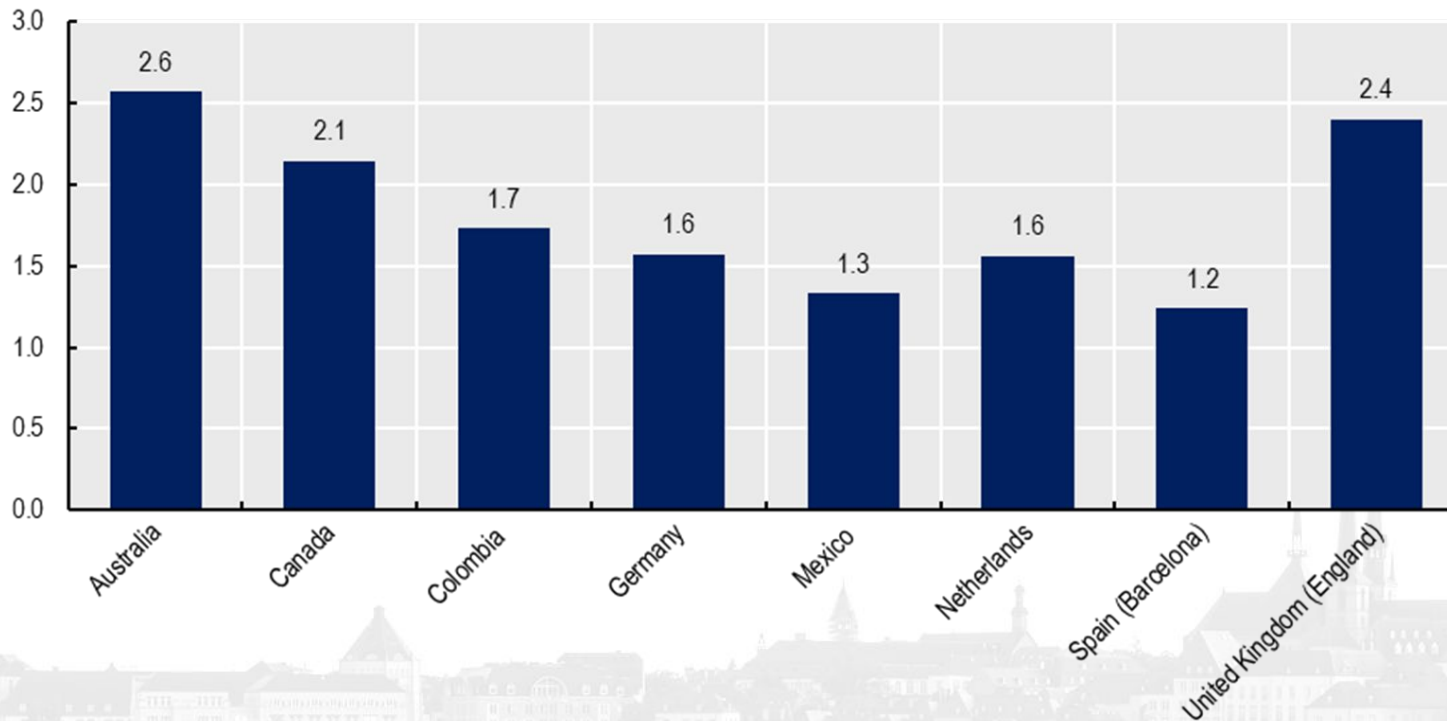
COVID-19 has taken a massive toll on human life...



Source: OECD Health Statistics, OECD (2023, forthcoming) Ready for the next crisis: investing in resilient health systems and OECD (2022, forthcoming) Health at a Glance: Europe

...highlighting widespread inequalities...

Rate ratio for COVID-19 mortality between people living in the most and least deprived areas



Inequalities in mortality are observed across several socio-economic and demographic markers

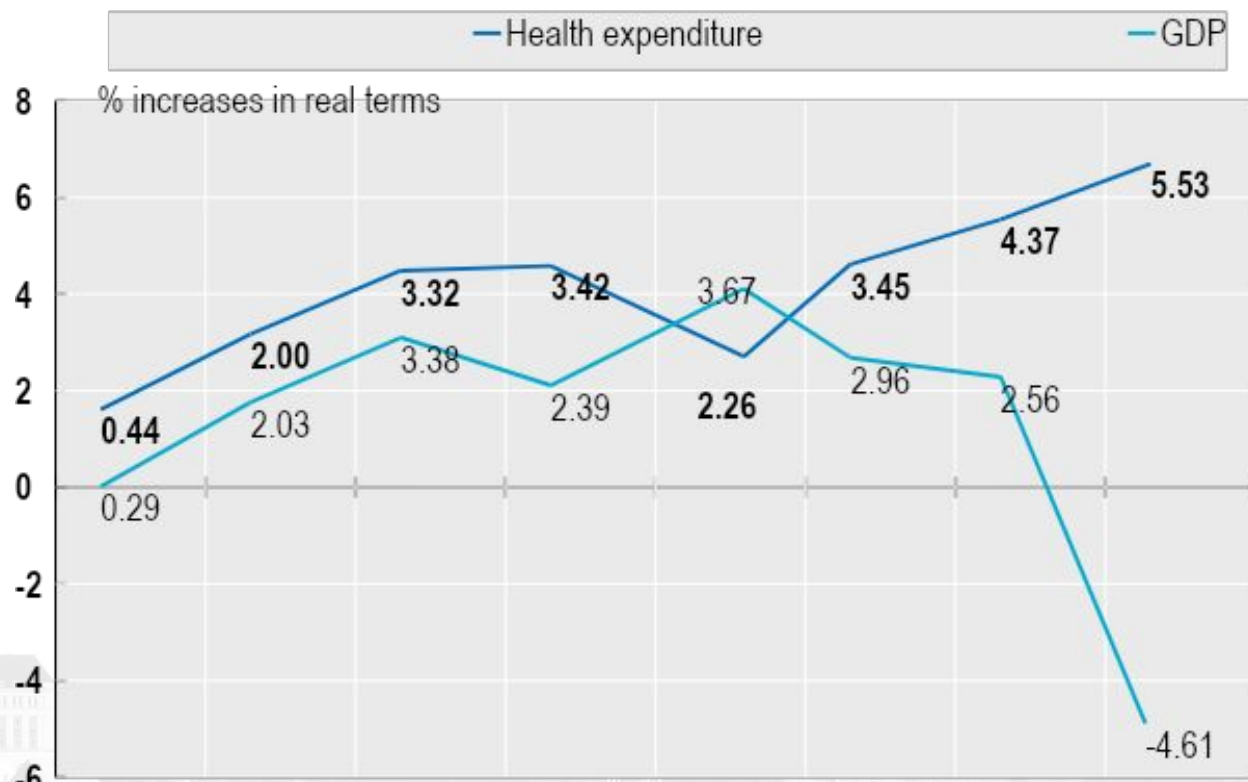
X 1.4 - 1.8 for low income groups

X 2.0 – 2.3 for Black and Hispanic people

X 1.1 – 2.2 for foreign-born population

But there was also a remarkable response: increased funding to the health system ...

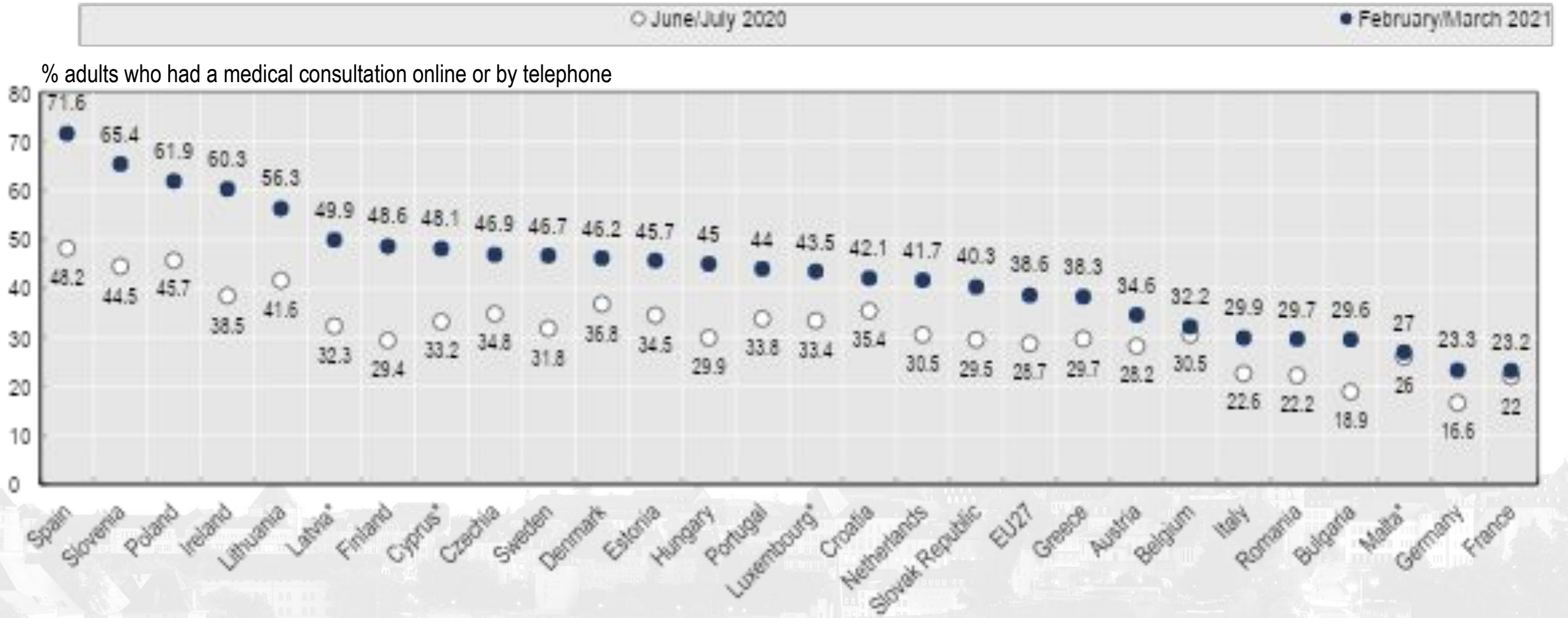
Annual growth in per capita health expenditure and GDP,
EU27, 2013-2020



- Health expenditure per capita rose at a greater pace than before COVID-19
- The increase in health spending as a portion of GDP was even more dramatic – because GDP decreased in 2020.
- In EU-27, the percentage of GDP allocated to health care increased from 9.9% (2019) to 10.9% (2020).

... increased use of telehealth

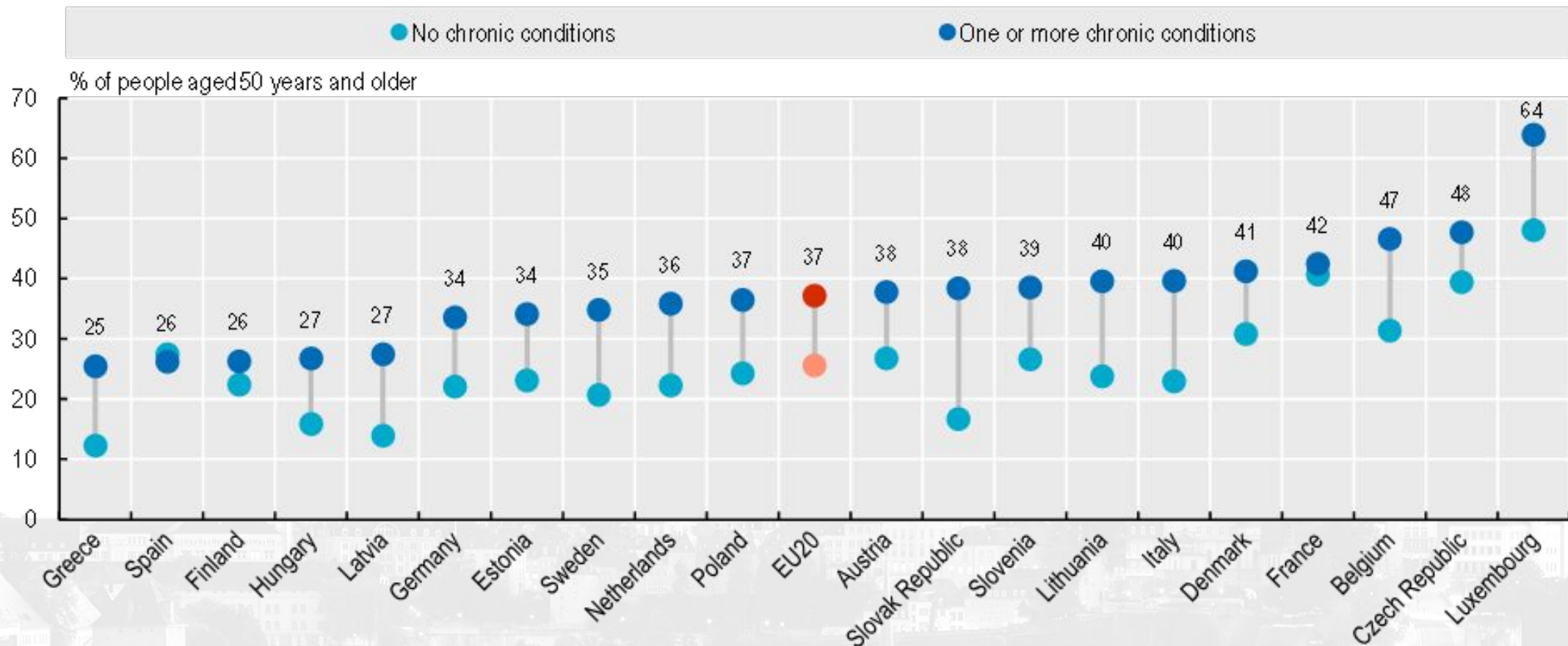
Teleconsultations with doctors in EU countries, June/July 2020 and February/March 2021



The pandemic provided valuable lessons on resilience and security

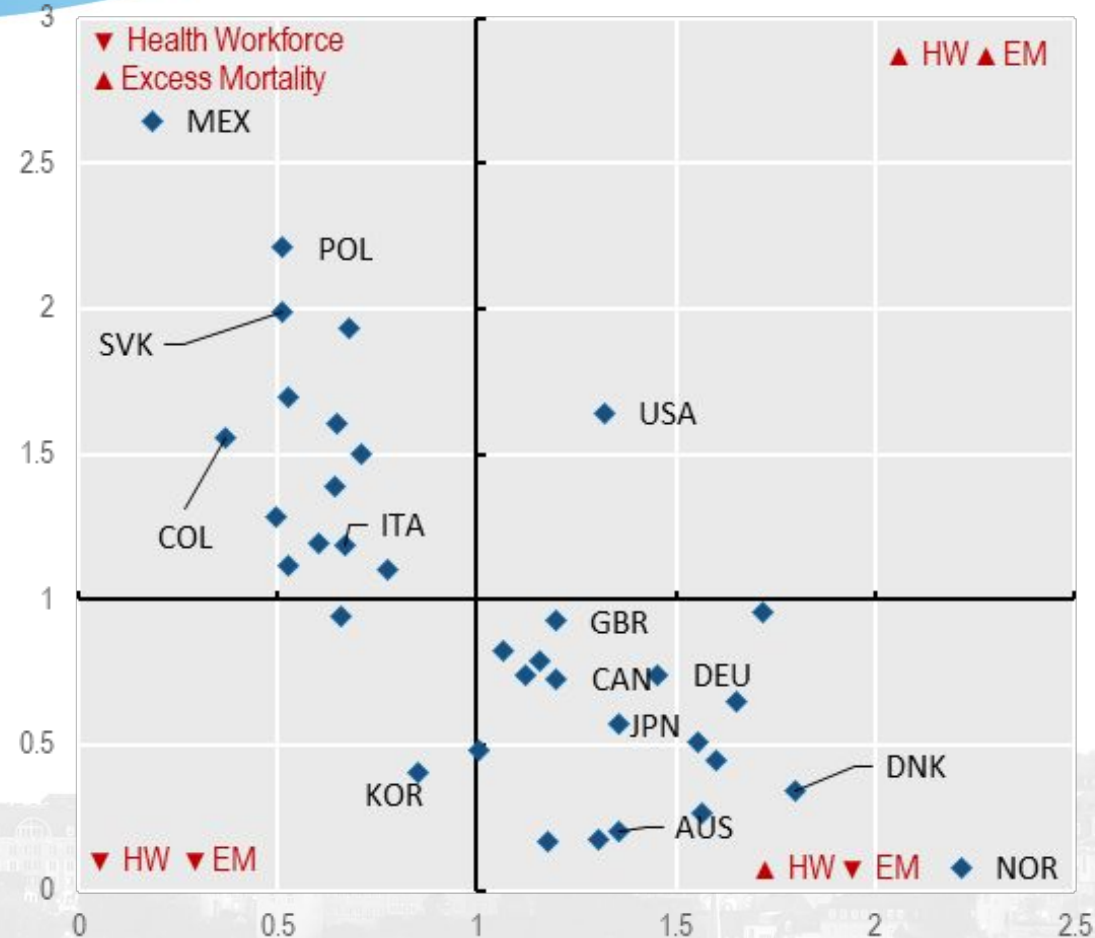
1. Population vulnerability: Forgone or postponed care greater for those with chronic conditions

Percentage of people age 50+ reporting forgoing or postponing medical care due to COVID-19, with and without a self-reported chronic health condition



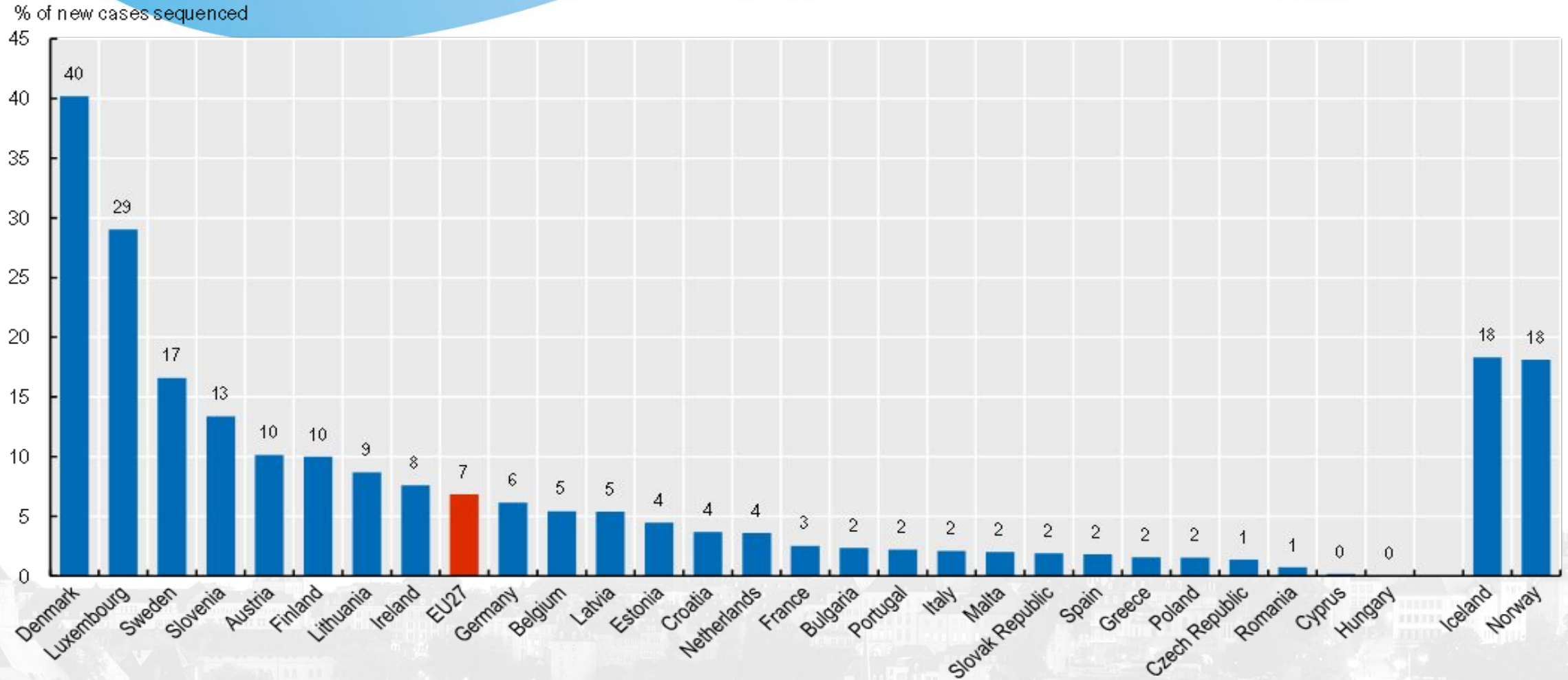
2. Sufficient Workforce is essential

Excess mortality relative to OECD average



Health and social workforce numbers relative to the OECD average

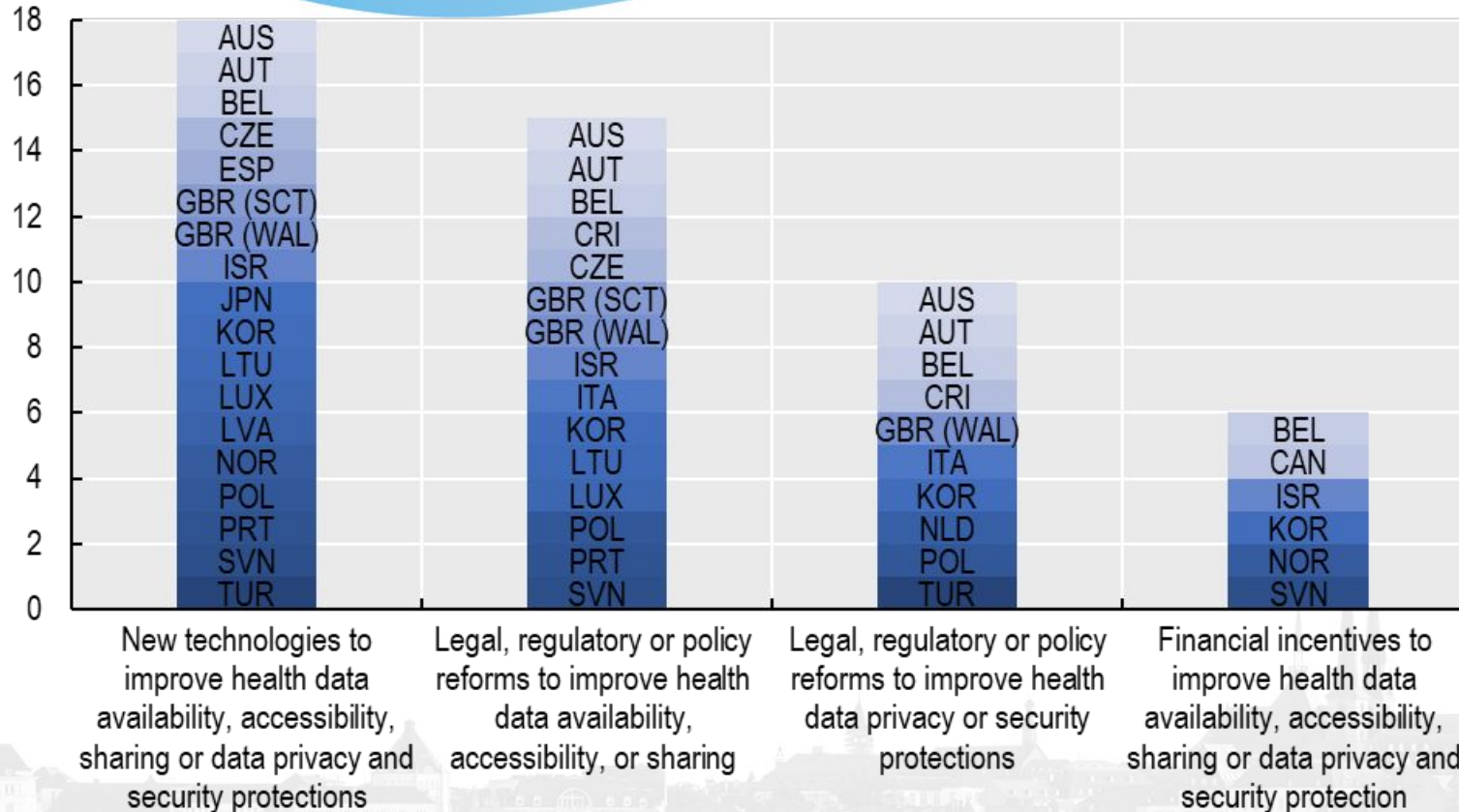
3. Surveillance and Data: Huge variation in ability to sequence SARS-CoV-2 in 2021 across the EU



Some data limitations were addressed, many remain

Changes to health data governance models as a result of COVID-19

Country has introduced as a result of COVID-19

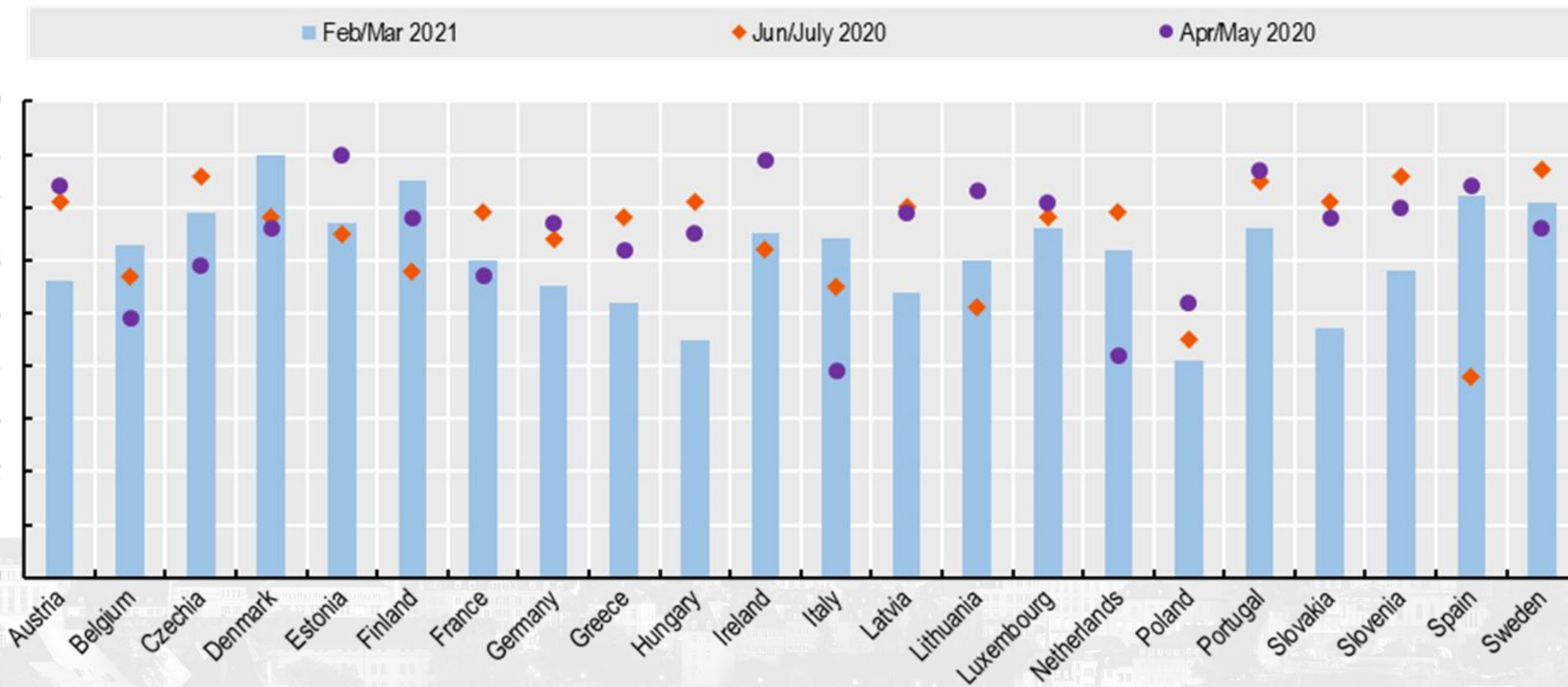


- Rapid improvements in data infrastructure took place to address information gaps
- Huge value from linked data and population level data capture

Note: N= 24 Countries. For the purposes of this figure, Scotland, Northern Ireland, and Wales, are represented independently.

Source: OECD Questionnaire on Health data and governance changes during the COVID-19 pandemic, 2021

4. Governance: Trust in healthcare systems is declining in some countries

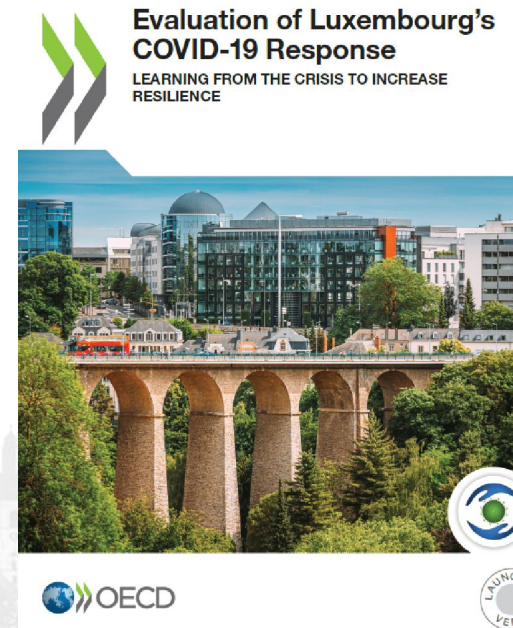


- Institutional trust associated with improved outcomes from the pandemic, such as:
 - increased compliance with containment and mitigation measures
 - contact tracing.

The importance of whole of government response

Example: Luxembourg's COVID-19 response

- Strong response was built upon a whole-of-government approach based on influenza plan
- Agile inter-ministerial management led by highest level
- Active crisis communication
- Rapid mobilisation of resources to health system
 - Testing, tracing and vaccination
- Expansion of support scheme for social and employments
 - Self-employed payments later than others



Source: OECD (2022) Evaluation of Luxembourg's COVID-19 Response: Learning from the crisis to increase resilience
<https://doi.org/10.1787/2c78c89f-en>

Government evaluations should expand scope

Government evaluations of COVID-19 responses were mostly on economic, financial, and social support



First lessons from government evaluations of COVID-19 responses: A synthesis

21 January 2022

While the COVID-19 pandemic has hit different countries with varying intensity, responding to the crisis has presented an unprecedented challenge to most governments. In this context, evaluations provide critical tools to support real time sharing of lessons on what is working, what is not, what could work and for whom. This paper draws lessons from evaluations that governments have carried out themselves of their COVID-19 responses. It provides a synthesis of the evidence from 67 such evaluations produced in OECD countries during the first 15 months of the pandemic. These first evaluations show that many governments came to similar conclusions, and allow us to identify important insights that can feed into ongoing policy responses to the crisis – as well as increase future resilience.

FIRST LESSONS FROM GOVERNMENT EVALUATIONS OF COVID-19 RESPONSES: A SYNTHESIS © OECD 2022

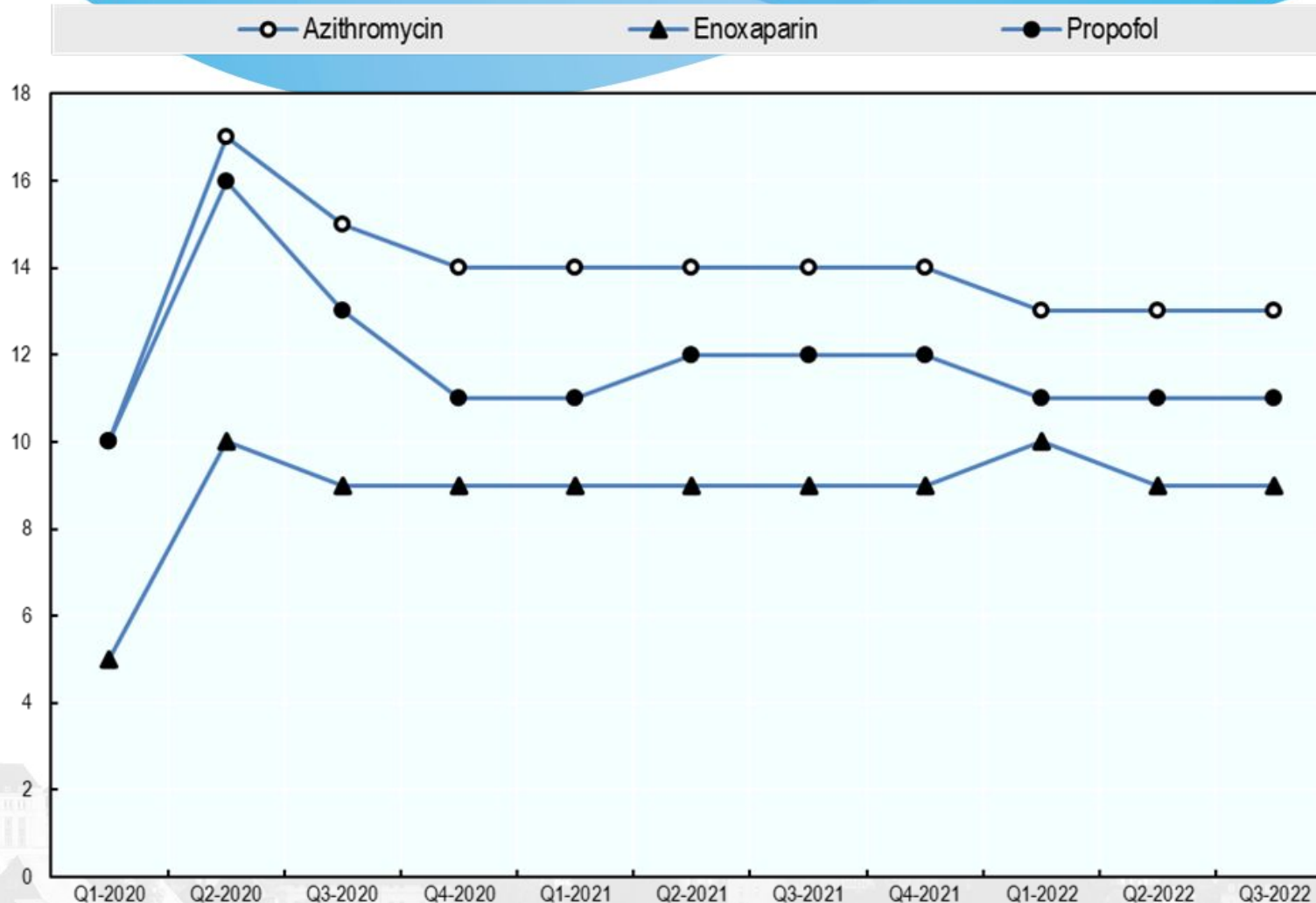


Category of policy response	Types of policies	Total evaluations (n = 67)	Ex post and ex durante evaluations
EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS	Disaster Risk Anticipation and Foresight	31%	31%
	Emergency protocols	33%	33%
	Preparedness of Critical Sectors	16%	16%
MANAGEMENT OF CRISIS RESPONSE	Crisis Communication	30%	30%
	Governance of Crisis Response	33%	31%
	Whole-of-Society Response	24%	24%
RESPONSE AND RECOVERY	Lockdown and Restrictions	40%	34%
	Economic and Financial Support	67%	46%
	Health policies	40%	33%
	Social policies	52%	40%

Source: OECD (2022) First lessons from government evaluations of COVID-19 responses. A synthesis

5. International co-operation – avoiding trade barriers during crisis is key

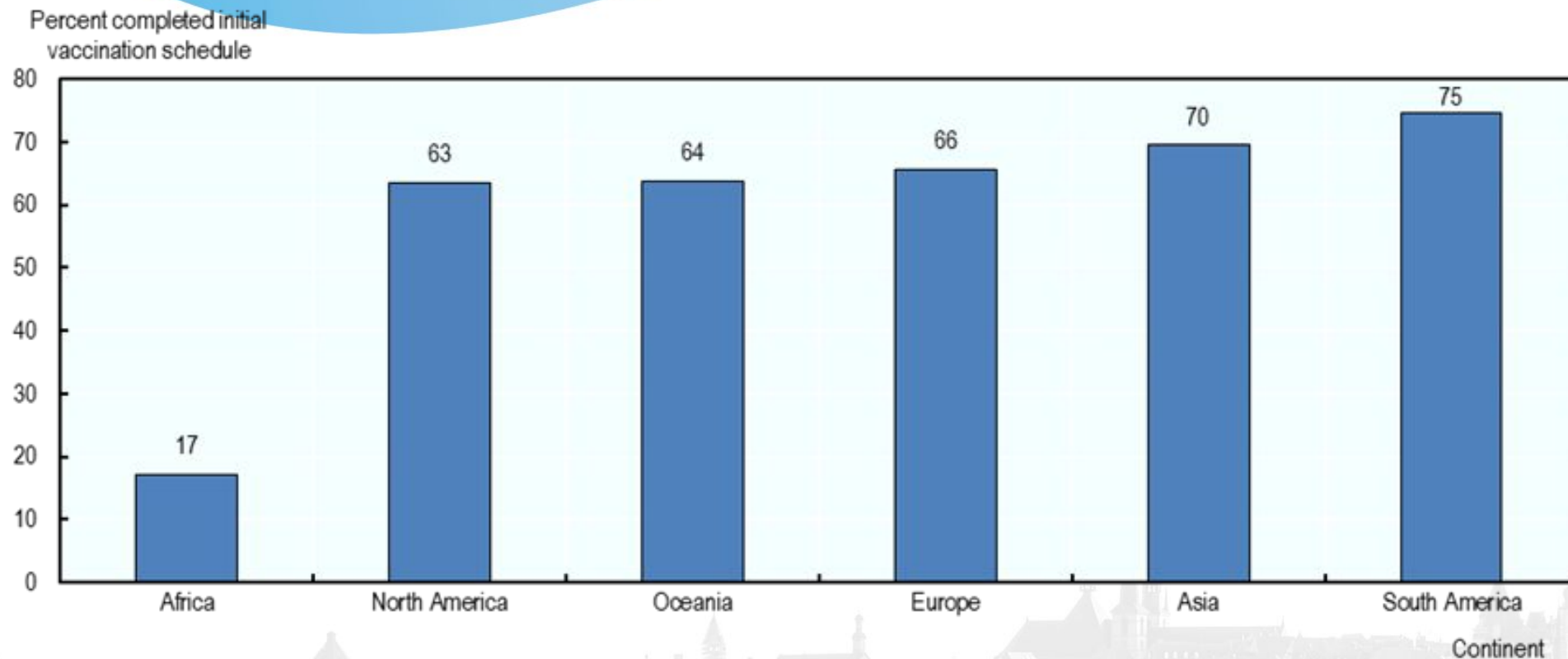
Number of countries with export restrictions on azithromycin, enoxaparin and propofol (Q1-2020 to Q3 2022)



- Trade barriers restricted the use of treatments
- **Resilient supply chains** need a combination of:
 - Market intelligence: Monitoring flows and state of supply chains
 - Smart procurement: Diversification in suppliers
 - Strategic stockpiles: Shared stockpiles with pre-agreed rules of distribution

Source: OECD (2023, forthcoming) Ready for the next crisis: investing in resilient health systems

International co-operation - the development of COVID-19 vaccines was a technical success – but inequities remain



Source: OECD (2023, forthcoming) Ready for the next crisis: investing in resilient health systems

Lessons

- **Underinvestment in resilience and security has enormous consequences & pandemic preparedness was generally insufficient**
- Quick action was undertaken, but **leveraging transformation in the health sector requires better data and targeted resources, eg health workforce**
- **Reducing vulnerabilities and protecting the vulnerable** will make populations and the health system stronger
- **Inter-agency co-operation backed by fit for purpose governance structures is crucial**
- **International equity and co-operation** needs to be strengthened

Thank you

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