

# Health Literacy

Definition, overview and concepts



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# Learning outcomes

You are able to:

- explain the growing importance of health literacy in Europe and in your country
- define health literacy with its three categories
- describe the different aspects on health literacy on micro, meso and macro level





Image 1. Senior male patient meet therapist to receive medical consultation



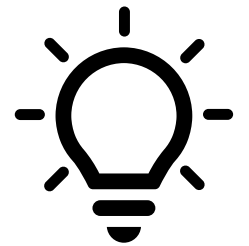
Image 2. Healthy lifestyle

# Health Literacy - Definitions

- Many definitions
- Concept is constantly developing
- Definition according to Sørensen et al. (2012):

“peoples’ knowledge, motivation and competences to **access, understand, appraise, and apply** health information in order to make judgments and take decisions in everyday life concerning

- healthcare (in case of disease),
- disease prevention (being in risk for disease) and
- health promotion (keeping sufficient health)”



# Health Literacy Definition

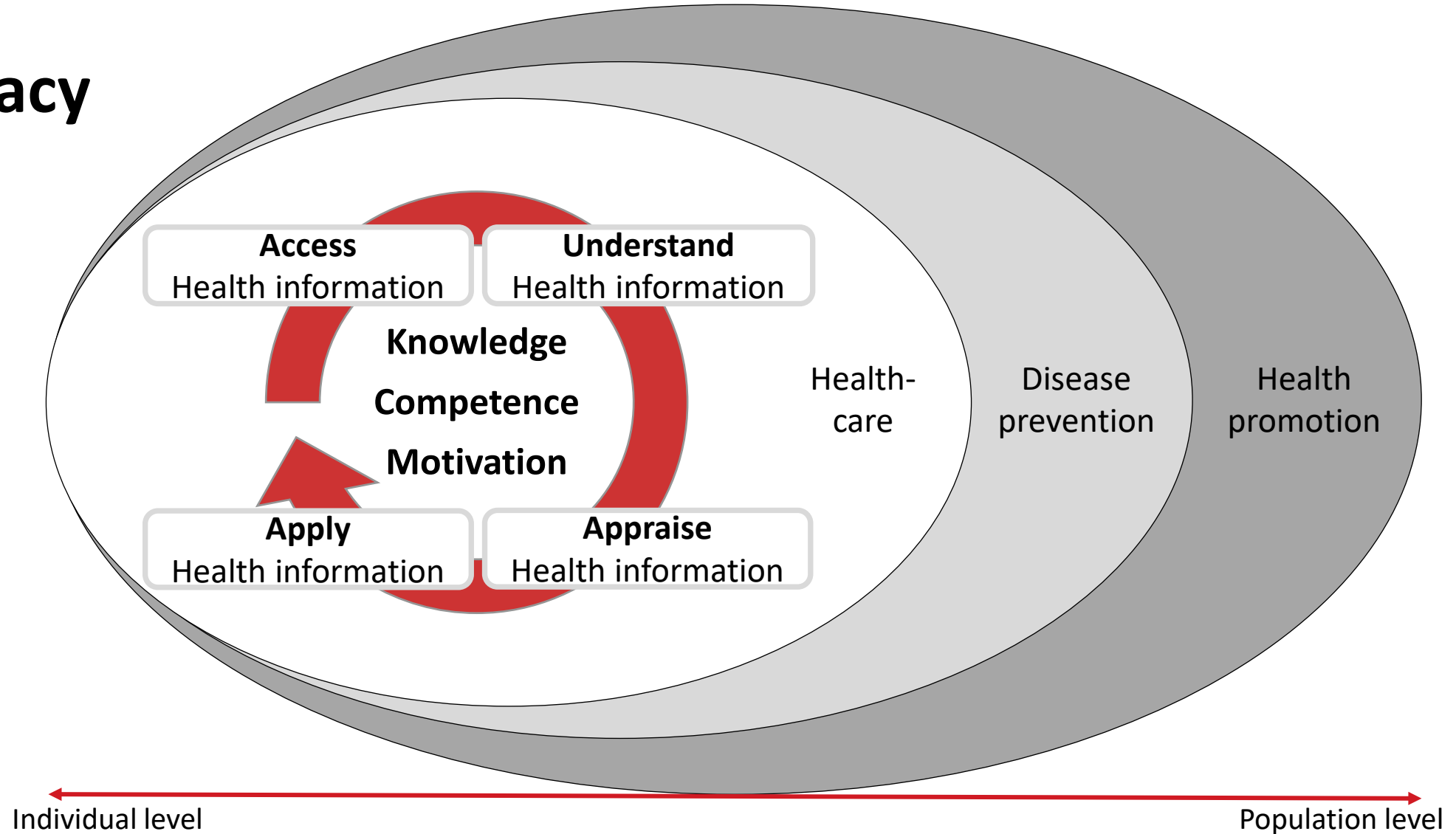


Image 3. Simplified Health Literacy Model according to Sørensen et al. (2012)



# Categories of Health Literacy

<b>Functional health literacy</b>	Basic skills in reading and writing so as to be able to function effectively in a health context.
<b>Interactive health literacy</b>	More advanced cognitive, literacy and social skills to participate in healthcare actively.
<b>Critical health literacy</b>	The ability to analyse and use information critically to participate in action to overcome structural barriers to health

[Nutbeam, 2008]

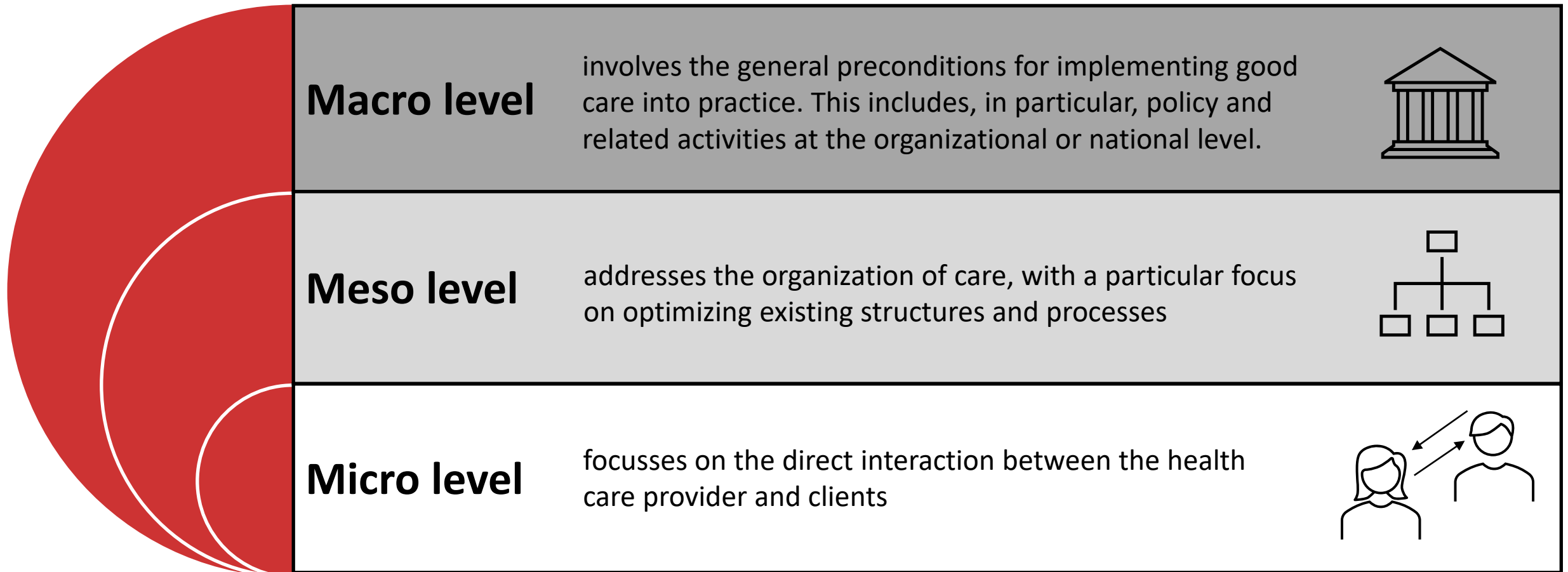


Image 1. Senior male patient meet therapist to receive medical consultation



Image 2. Healthy lifestyle

# Levels of Health Literacy



# Health Literacy in Europe (Examples)

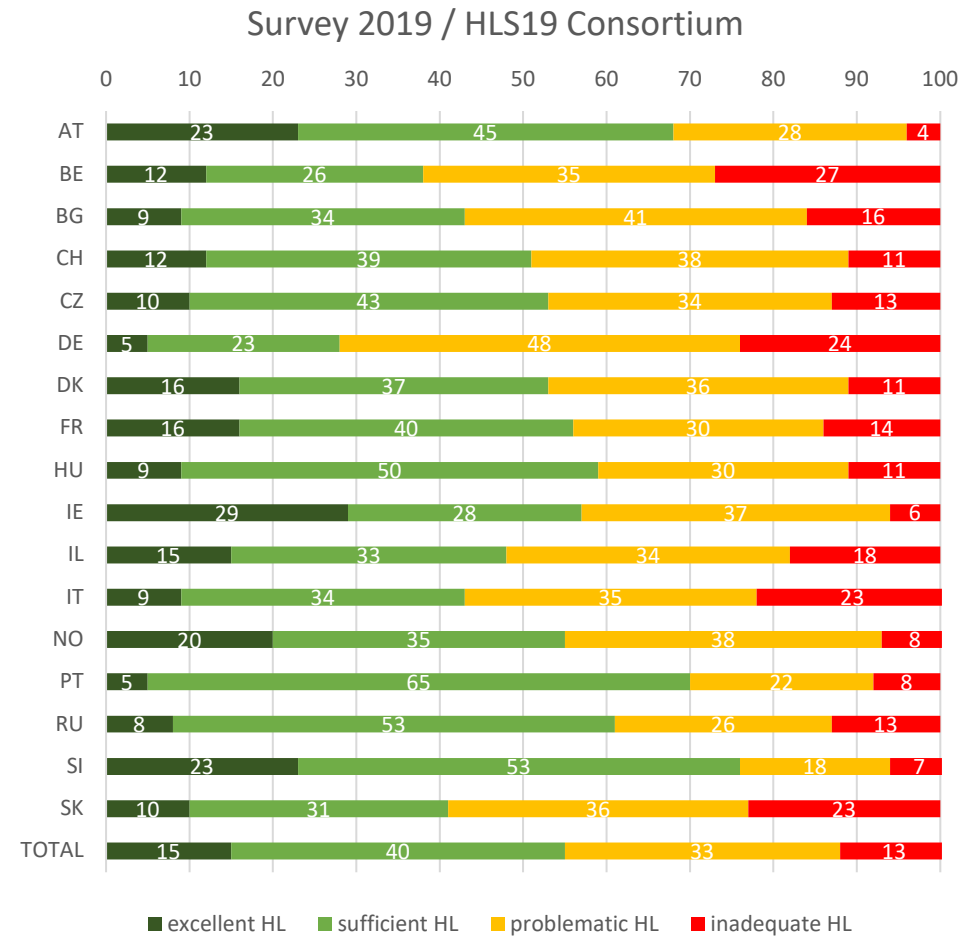
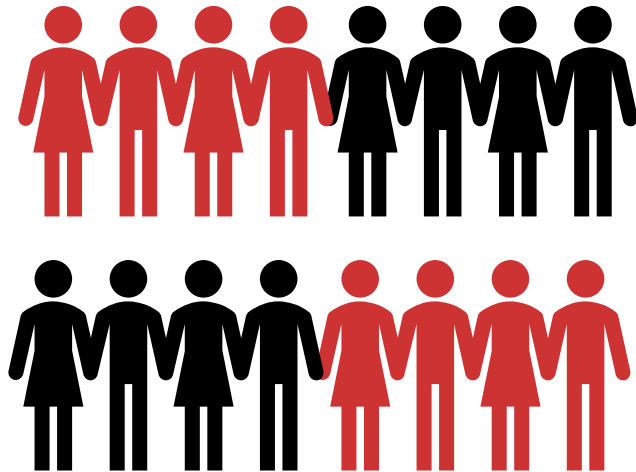


Image 4. Results of European Health Literacy Survey, 2019



# Selected countries between 2012 and 2019? What are the differences?

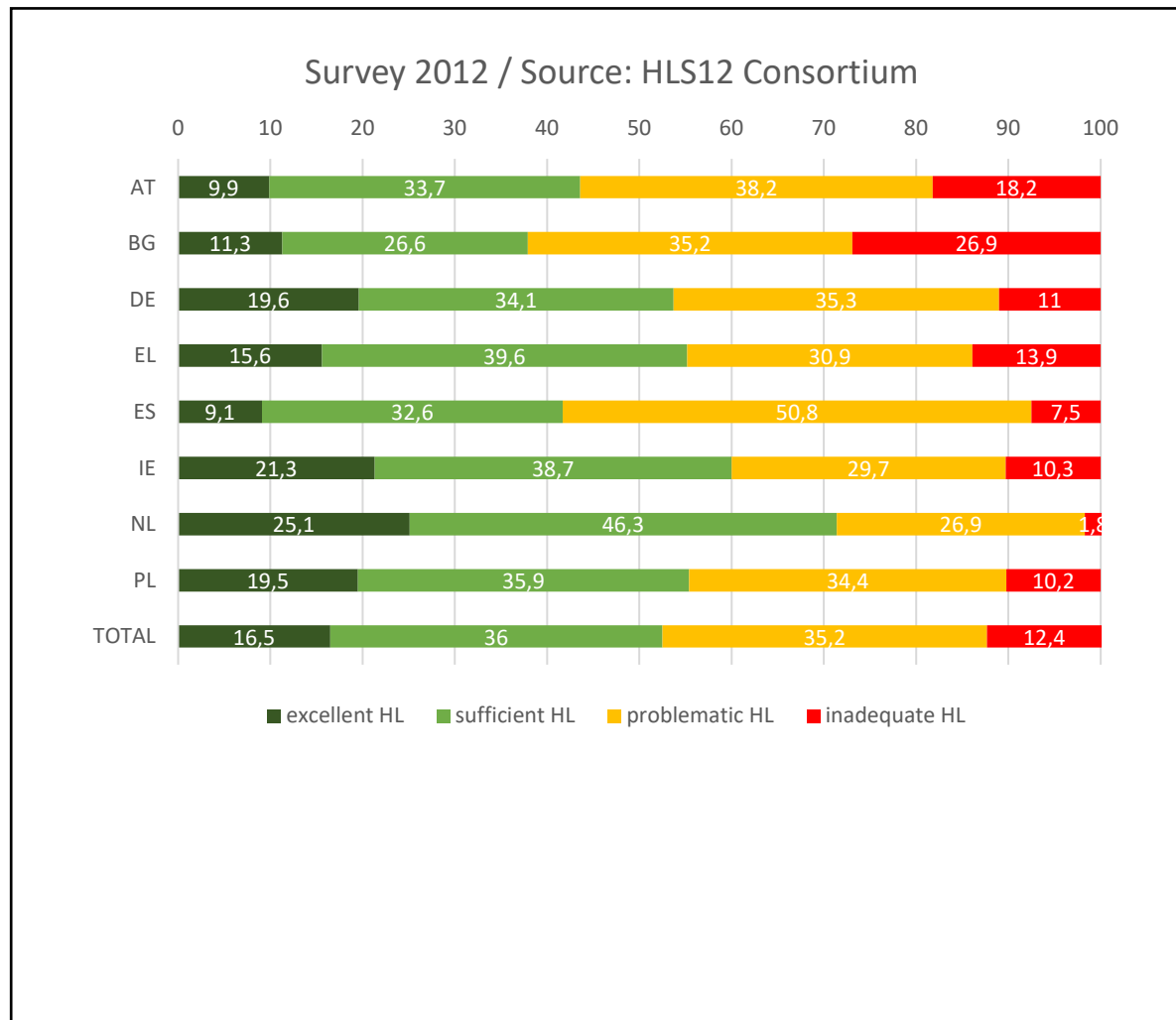


Image 5. Results of European Health Literacy Survey, 2012

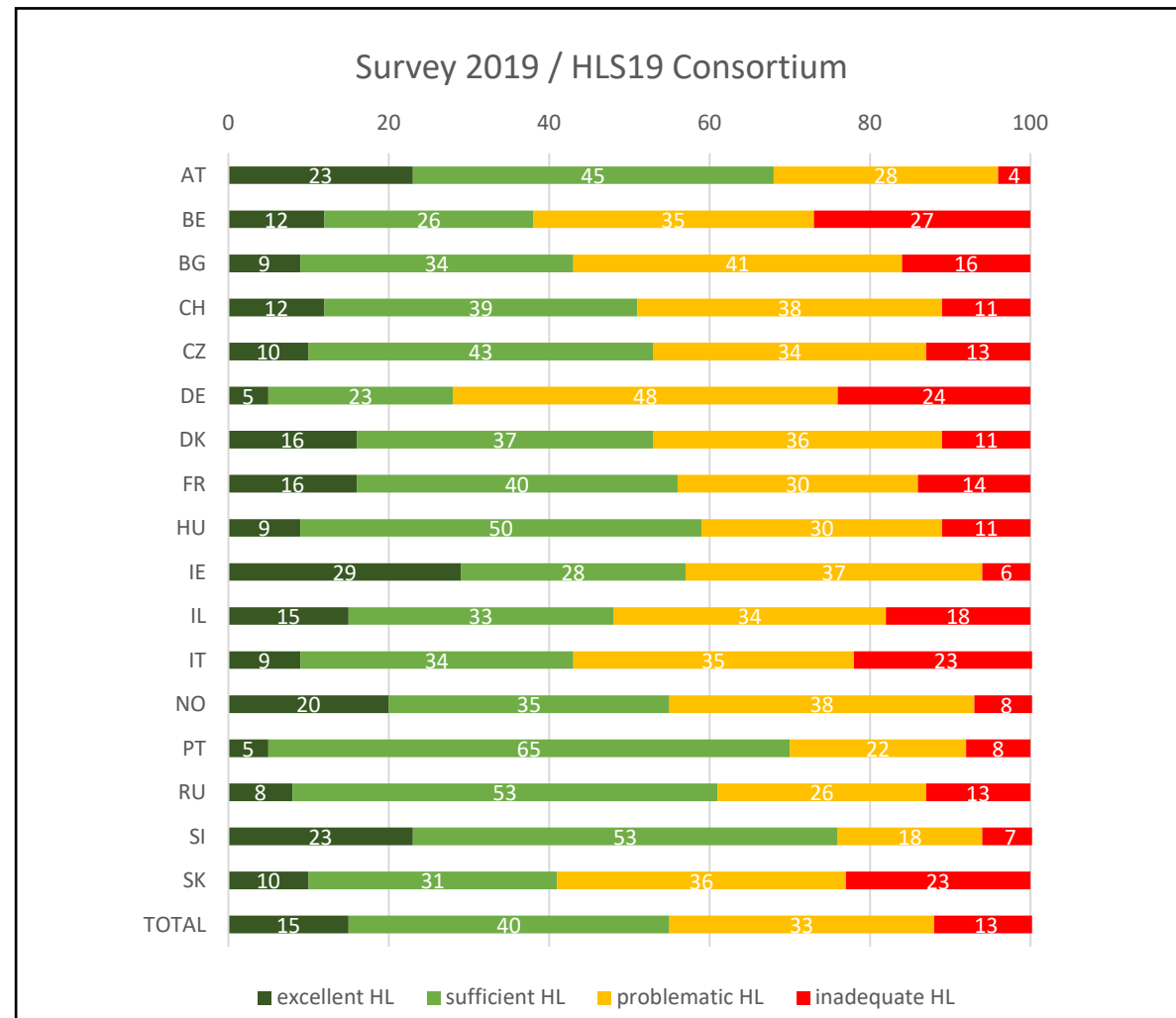


Image 4. Results of European Health Literacy Survey, 2019

# References

- Image 1: [Senior male patient meet therapist to receive medical consultation](#) by [fizkes](#) from [shutterstock](#), free license by [shutterstock](#)
- Image 2: [Healthy lifestyle](#) by [Chinnapong](#) from [shutterstock](#), free license by [shutterstock](#)
- Image 3. Simplified Health Literacy model according to Sørensen et al. & (HLS-EU) Consortium Health Literacy Project European. (2012). Health literacy and public health: A systematic review and integration of definitions and models. *BMC Public Health*, 12(1), 80. <https://doi.org/10.1186/1471-2458-12-80>
- Image 4. Results of European Health Literacy Survey, 2019. The HLS19 Consortium of the WHO Action Network M-POHL (2021): International Report on the Methodology, Results, and Recommendations of the European Health Literacy Population Survey 2019-2021 (HLS19) of M-POHL. Austrian National Public Health Institute, Vienna
- Image 5. Results of European Health Literacy Survey, 2012, HLS-EU Consortium (2012): Comparative report of health literacy in eight EU member states. The European Health Literacy Survey HLS-EU (Second revised and extended version, 22.Juli 2014)
- All icons/pictograms from PowerPoint® for Microsoft 365 MSO (Version 2205 Build 16.0.15225.20172) 64 Bit )

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# Health Literacy

Impact of limited health literacy on clients



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# Learning outcomes

You are able to:

- describe the impact of health literacy on health and disease
- describe the impact of health literacy on quality of life
- explain obstacles clients with limited health literacy may face



# What is higher health literacy associated with?

- increased health and disease knowledge
  - better self-reported health status
  - better problem-solving and motivation
  - more adequate use of health services
  - shorter hospitalization
- Lower health care costs
- Better health and longer life-expectancy



**better self-management**



Image 1. Health care costs



# Clients with limited HL may face the following obstacles

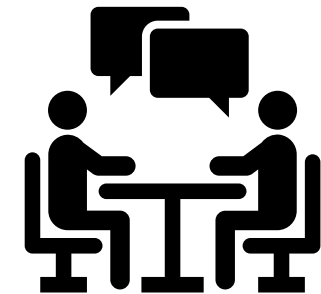
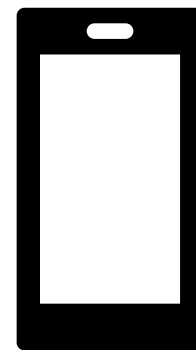
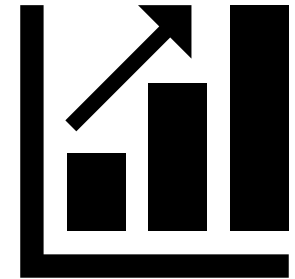


Image 2. Health insurance

## Barriers lead to:

- limited use of health insurance
- less utilization of preventive healthcare services
- less adherence to the therapy and medication
- lack of motivation and active participation
- inability of taking adequate health decision

→ which finally increase the risk to acquire a wide range of medical conditions

# References

Image 1. [Health care costs](#) by [mentalmind](#) from [shutterstock](#), free license by [shutterstock](#)

Image 2. [Health insurance](#) by [rawpixel.com](#) from [freepik](#)

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# Health Literacy

## Prevalence and risk factors of HL



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# Learning outcomes

You are able to:

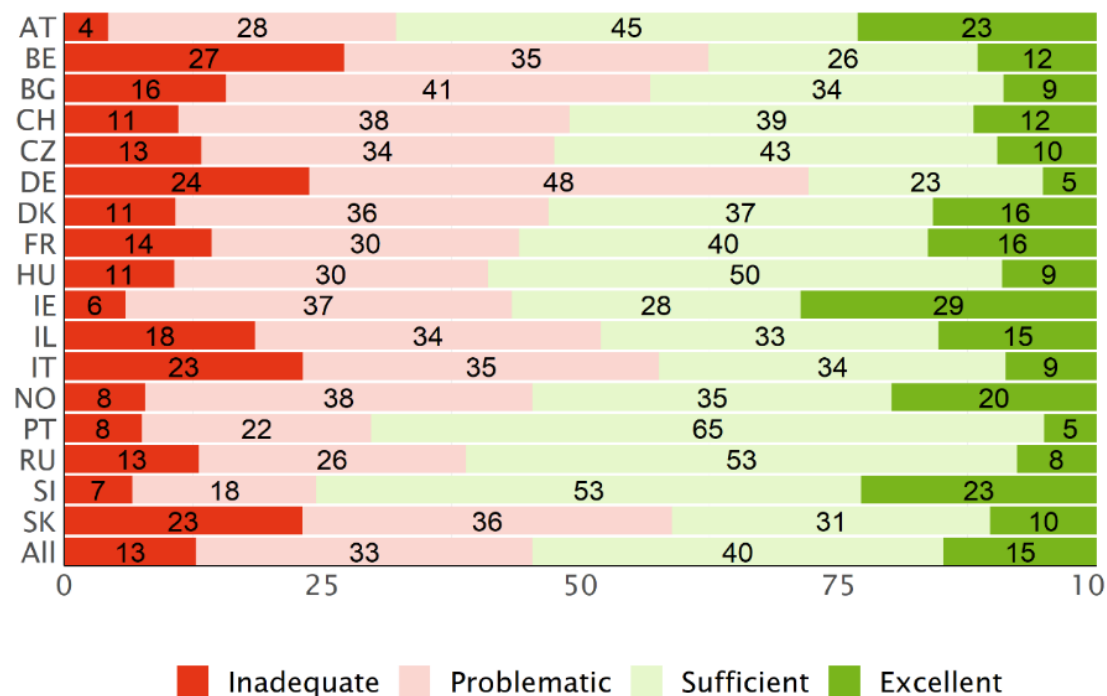
- describe the prevalence of health literacy in Europe and in your country
- explain the (risk) factors that influence the clients' individual level of HL





# Health Literacy in Europe

Figure 5.4:  
Percentage of respondents by categorical level of General HL as measured by the HLS<sub>19</sub>-Q12, for each country and the mean for all countries



Source: HLS<sub>19</sub> Consortium

Image 1. Results of European Health Literacy Survey, 2019

# Which groups of people have a higher percentage of limited health literacy?

- People with financial deprivation
- People with low social status
- People with low education
- People with migration background
- Elderly people

Quenzel et al. (2016); Sørensen et al. (2015)



Image 2. People

## Risk factors that may influence HL

- education level
- financial status
- social and socioeconomic conditions
- demographic and socio-political factors
- age
- language skills
- reading and arithmetic skills
- cultural and religious specificity
- chronic disease
- disease severity
- physical and cognitive abilities
- access to health education materials
- health-related experience
- parental influences



# References

Image 1. Results of European Health Literacy Survey, 2019. The HLS19 Consortium of the WHO Action Network M-POHL (2021): International Report on the Methodology, Results, and Recommendations of the European Health Literacy Population Survey 2019-2021 (HLS19) of M-POHL. Austrian National Public Health Institute, Vienna

Image 2. [People](#) by [maljuk](#) from [shutterstock](#)

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