

# ADULT VACCINATION FINANCING IN THE EUROPEAN UNION: A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

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## OBJECTIVES

Preventive vaccination programs for adults often receive less attention and funding compared to those for children. The aim of this study was to examine the differences in both the level and the mechanisms of funding for adult vaccination across European Union (EU) countries. In addition, we sought to assess how different funding methods influence the effectiveness of vaccination promotion and coverage.

## METHODS

We collected and analyzed data on the funding mechanisms for adult vaccination across EU countries. Our comparative study included a review of national health policies and funding levels. We also examined correlations between funding methods and the success rates of vaccination programs, using the example of influenza vaccine coverage.

## RESULTS

Our analysis reveals that reimbursement systems for adult vaccination vary considerably across the EU (Table 1). In many countries, vaccine procurement is centralized, allowing for economies of scale and better pricing. However, decentralization in some regions enables tailored approaches to local needs.

In half of the countries studied, the cost of recommended vaccinations is fully covered by the government (Figure 1). Differences in financing models, such as public versus out-of-pocket expenditure, significantly impact vaccine uptake. Countries with strong public funding have higher vaccination rates and better health outcomes, with notable differences in influenza vaccination rates between Central and Eastern European countries and Western European countries (Figure 2).

Some countries, ad Poland and Norway, fully fund vaccination through national or regional budgets, while others, such as France and Germany, use social insurance. Mixed public-private models in Lithuania result in varying levels of accessibility, reflecting different health priorities across Europe.

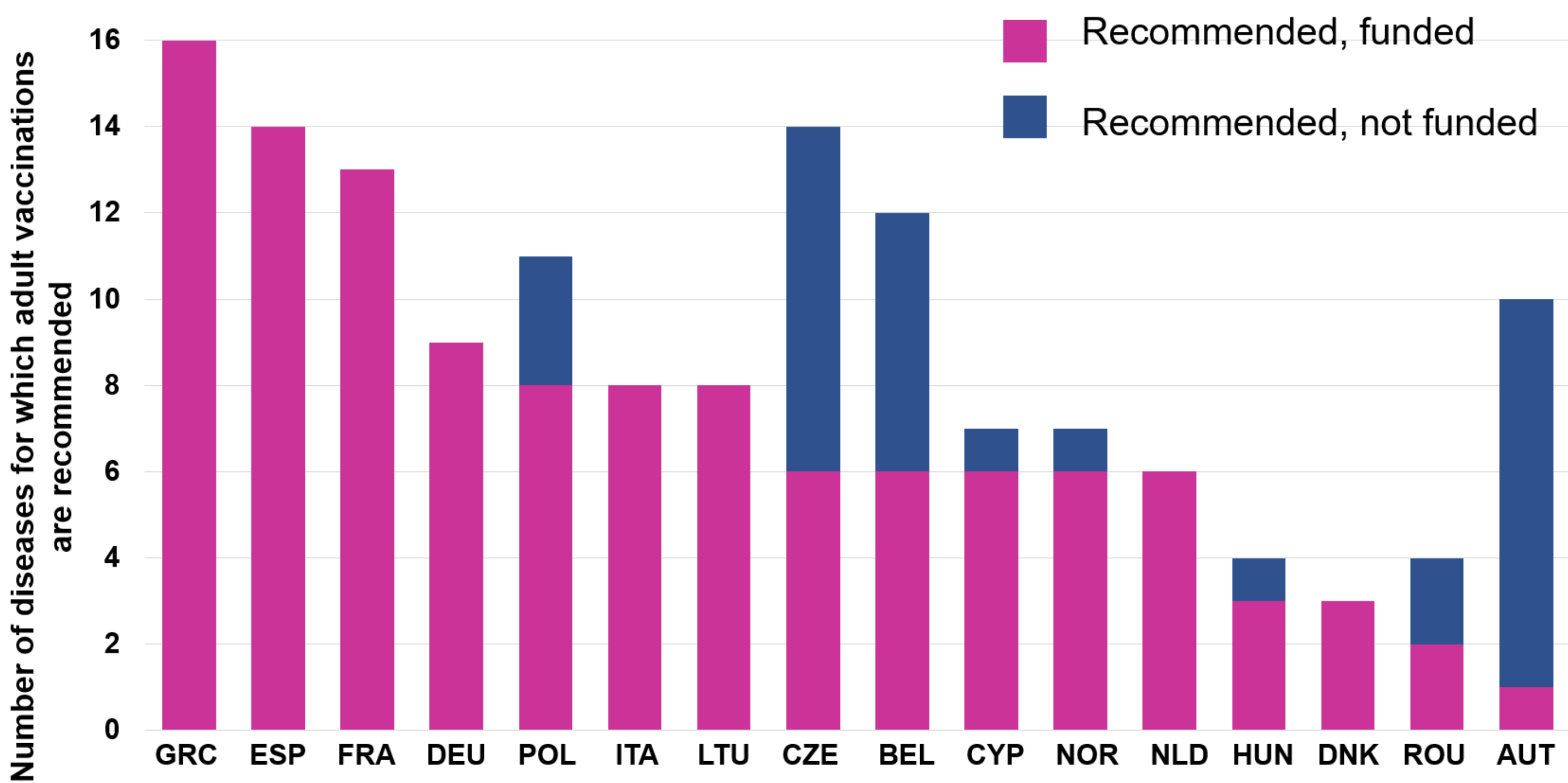


Figure 1. Number of recommended vaccines in individual countries, with reimbursement status indicated

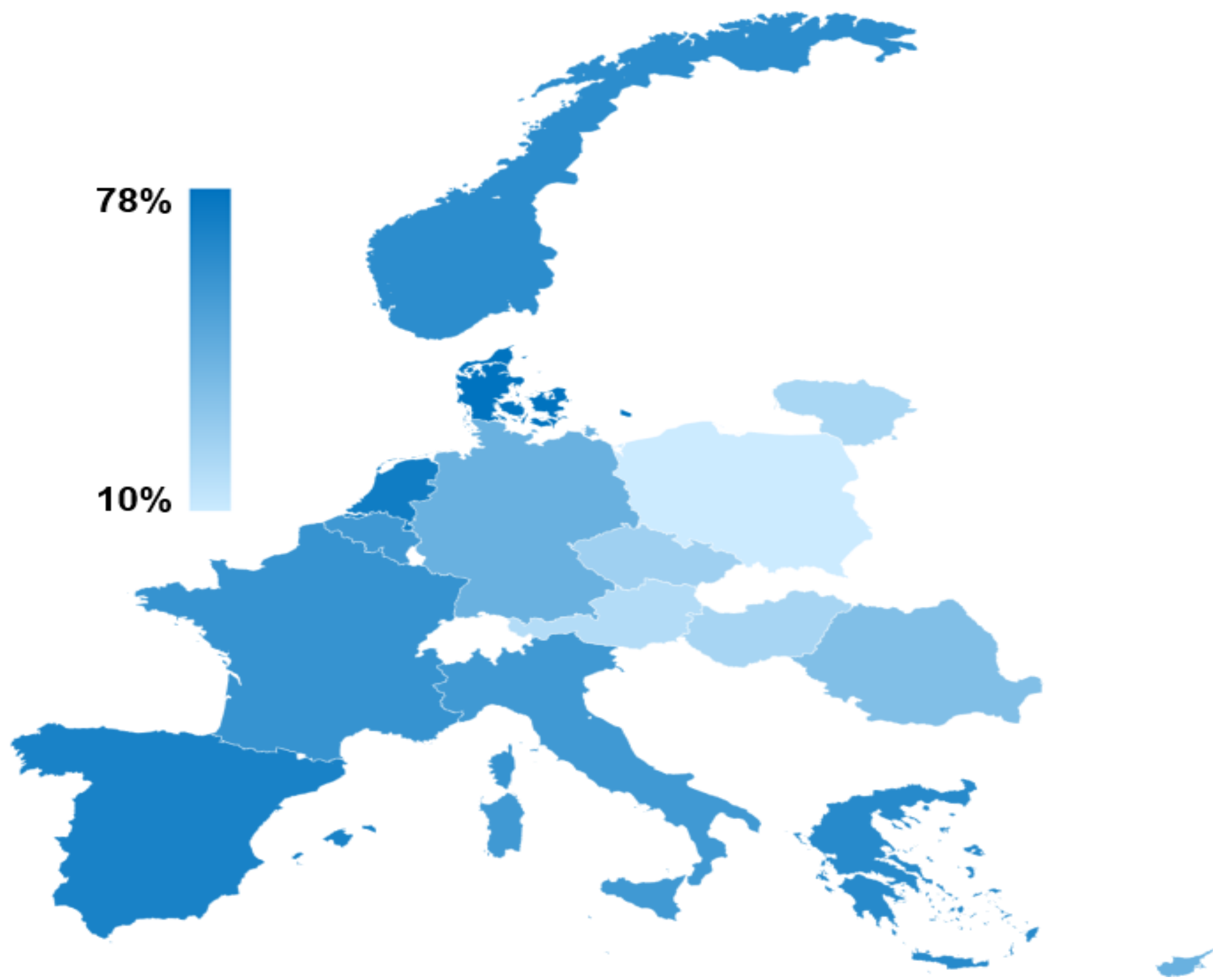


Figure 2. Influenza vaccine coverage by country

Table 1. Adult vaccines funding source

	AUT	BEL	CYP	CZE	DNK	FRA	DEU	GRC	HUN	ITA	LTU	NOR	POL	ROU	ESP	NLD
National or regional budget																
Social insurance																
Public-private partnerships																

AUT – Austria; BEL – Belgium; CYP – Cyprus; CZE – Czechia; DNK – Denmark; FRA – France; DEU – Germany; GRC – Greece; HUN – Hungary; ITA – Italy; LTU – Lithuania; NOR – Norway; POL – Poland; ROU – Romania; ESP – Spain; NLD – The Netherlands.

Countries in green presents centralized health system

## CONCLUSION

Financing adult immunization programs is essential for building effective, sustainable systems that provide long-term protection against vaccine-preventable diseases. There is an urgent need for EU countries to share best practices and experiences in financing adult vaccinations. Harmonizing effective financing approaches, as seen in the collaborative efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic, could improve the overall effectiveness and efficiency of vaccination programs across Europe. Although the choice between centralized and decentralized purchasing of vaccine remains complex, in many cases, centralized purchasing and even cooperation at the EU-level could provide significant financial benefits and improve access to vaccination for the adult population.

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