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EAFP EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF FACULTIES OF PHARMACY

# PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF PHARMACISTS AS IMMUNIZERS



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## INTRODUCTION

The profile of services provided at pharmacies is constantly changing. For decades pharmacists have not been merely dispensing medicines but providing additional services to patients and society. Pharmacy is very often the first encounter with health care services for patients and in peripheral regions it might be the only place to obtain medical advice. Research has revealed, that patients perceive pharmacists as respected specialists with sufficient knowledge, and are pleased with additional services, such as monitoring of health indicators, speed tests, counselling and immunization. Estonian influenza vaccination coverage in 2017 was 4%, being the lowest in the European Union.

## AIM/S

The aim of this study was to evaluate the public perception and readiness for accepting pharmacists as immunizers.



The author would like to thank Estonian Pharmacists Association for endorsing the survey.

## METHOD

The survey was conducted during 2 weeks within the vaccination pilot project in October and November 2018 at 6 different pharmacies in Tallinn, Estonia.

The questionnaire consisted of 22 questions, it was voluntary and anonymous, including only adult patients who were vaccinated at pharmacies.

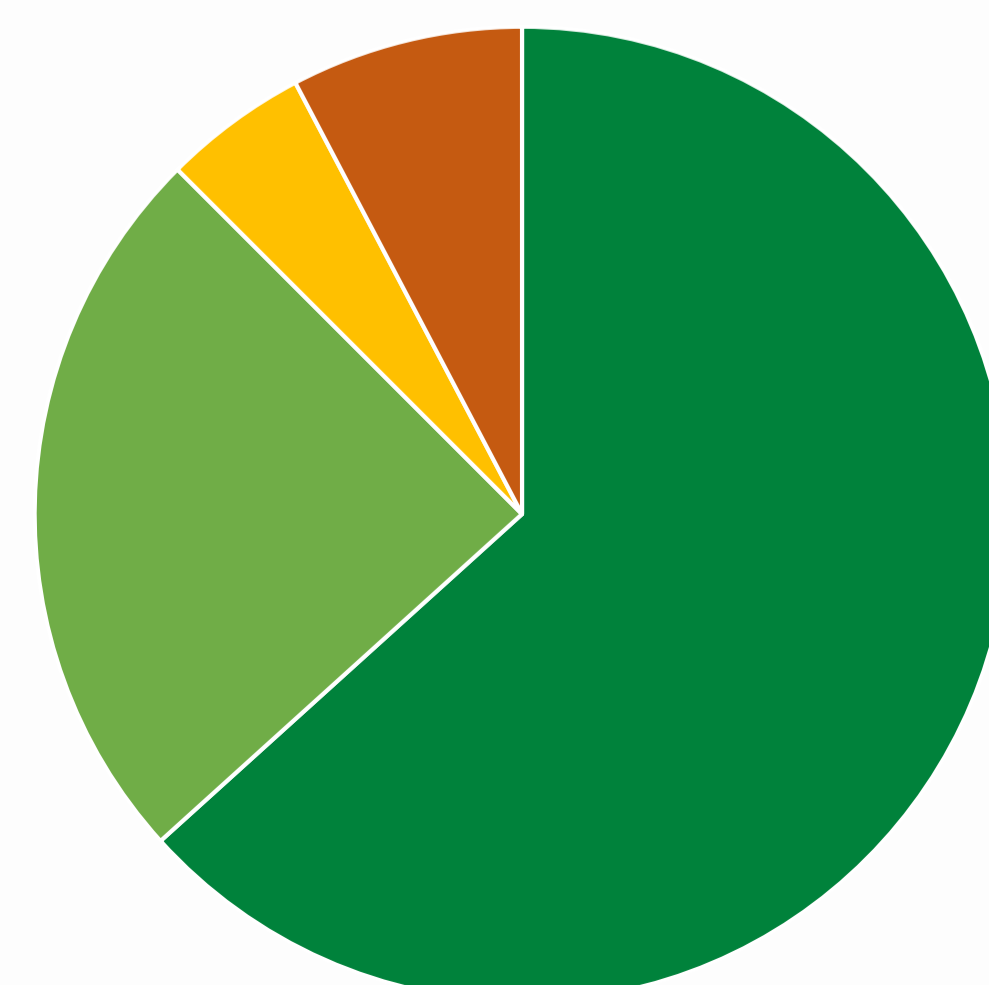
The data was collected via E-Formular database interface or paper questionnaires according to participant's preferences. Descriptive statistics was used to analyse data.

During the pilot project, only 15 pharmacies participated in the vaccination program, whereas 9098 people were vaccinated at pharmacies.

## RESULTS

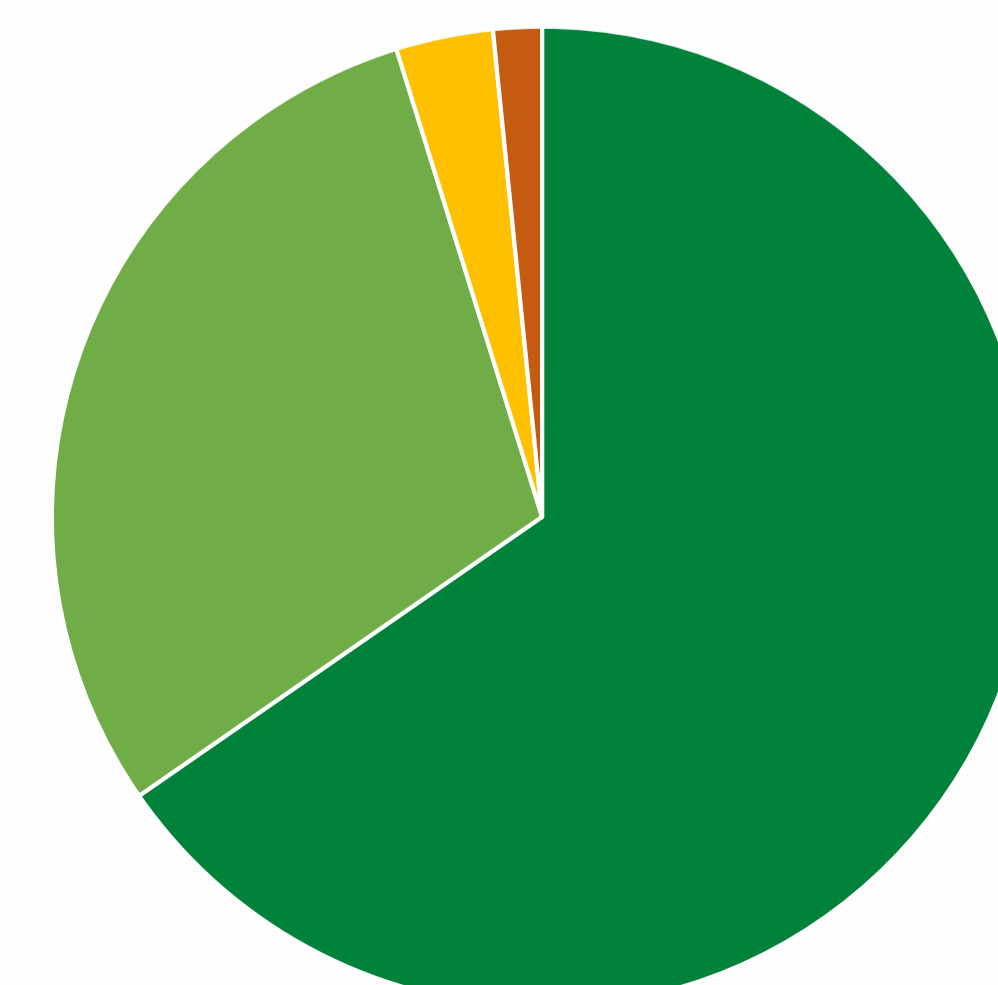
During the first pilot project 248 participants participated in the survey. Half of the participants were vaccinated against influenza for the first time. 98% considered pharmacy a suitable facility for vaccination and 88% would accept pharmacists as immunizers. 95% of participants would be vaccinated in pharmacies. Although 69% declared that immunization services are easily accessible without pharmacies, they chose to be vaccinated at pharmacies and 43% considered visiting a physician inconvenient during working hours.

Pharmacists should be allowed to vaccinate

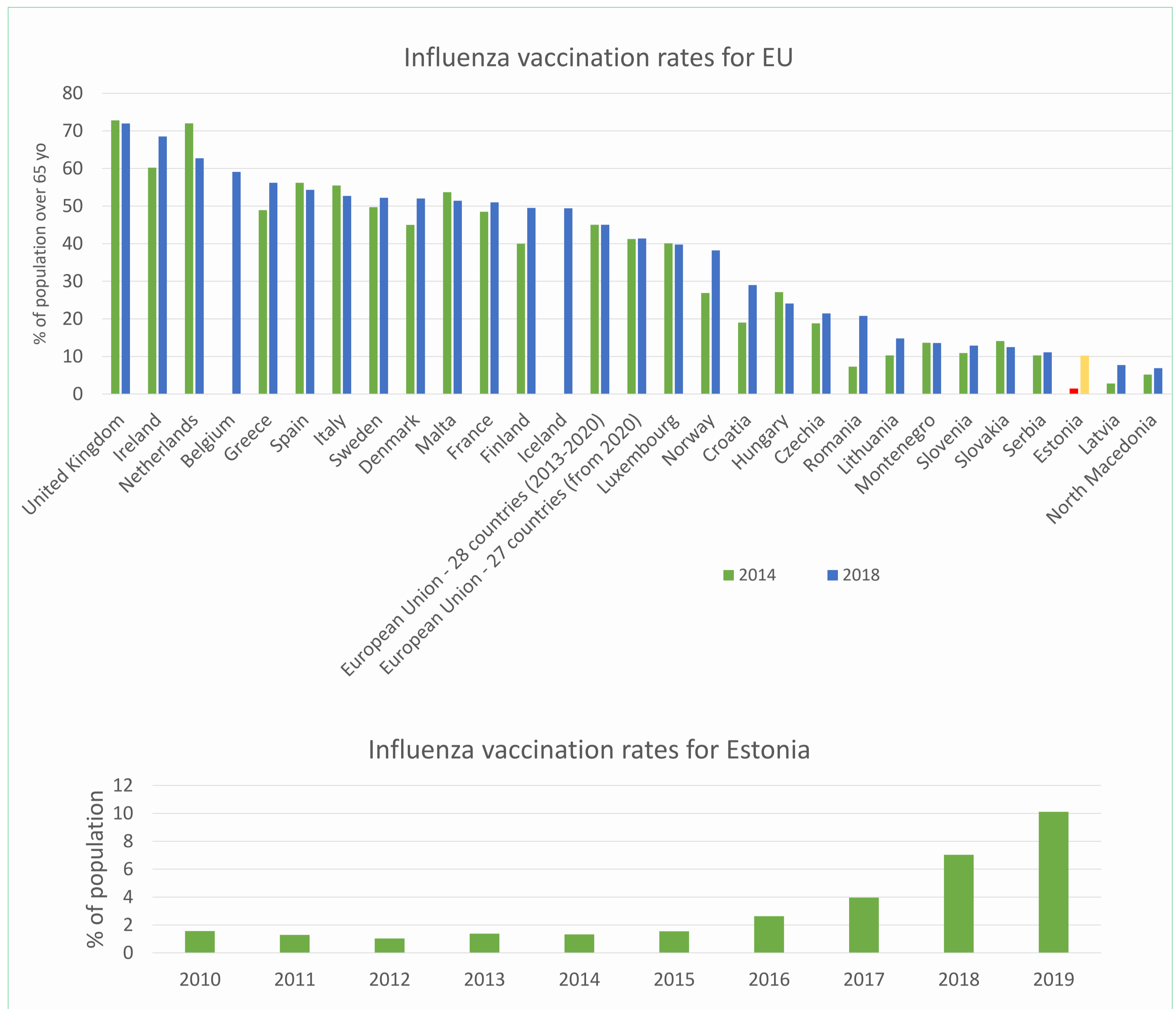


Legend: Agree, Mostly agree, Mostly disagree, Disagree

I will get my next flu shot in a pharmacy



Legend: Agree, Mostly agree, Mostly disagree, Disagree



## CONCLUSION

Estonian public is interested in accessing vaccination services via pharmacies. Pharmacists are perceived as trustworthy health care workers, who should possess the permit to vaccinate. Influenza vaccination coverage for influenza in Estonia has significantly improved due to the pilot programme in pharmacies and the continuous program and information campaigns conducted by pharmacies.

Estonia is quite far from reaching the goal of 75% vaccination coverage for influenza, but the pilot project proves this change can be facilitated by pharmacies.

## REFERENCES

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