



# EMA Public webinar on shortages: putting patients first

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# PGEU members: Professional pharmacists' bodies & pharmacies associations



**2025: 33 Countries**

- |   |           |   |                 |
|---|-----------|---|-----------------|
|    | Austria   |    | Luxembourg      |
|    | Belgium   |    | Malta           |
|    | Bulgaria  |    | Netherlands     |
|    | Croatia   |    | Poland          |
|    | Cyprus    |    | Portugal        |
|    | Czech Rep |    | Romania         |
|    | Denmark   |    | Slovakia        |
|    | Estonia   |    | Slovenia        |
|    | Finland   |    | Spain           |
|    | France    |    | Sweden          |
|   | Germany   |   | Kosovo          |
|  | Greece    |  | North Macedonia |
|  | Hungary   |  | Norway          |
|  | Ireland   |  | Switzerland     |
|  | Italy     |  | Turkey          |
|  | Latvia    |  | United Kingdom  |

# Medicine shortages – a triple threat



Negative impact on  
**patients' health**



Negative impact on  
**pharmacists' daily  
work**

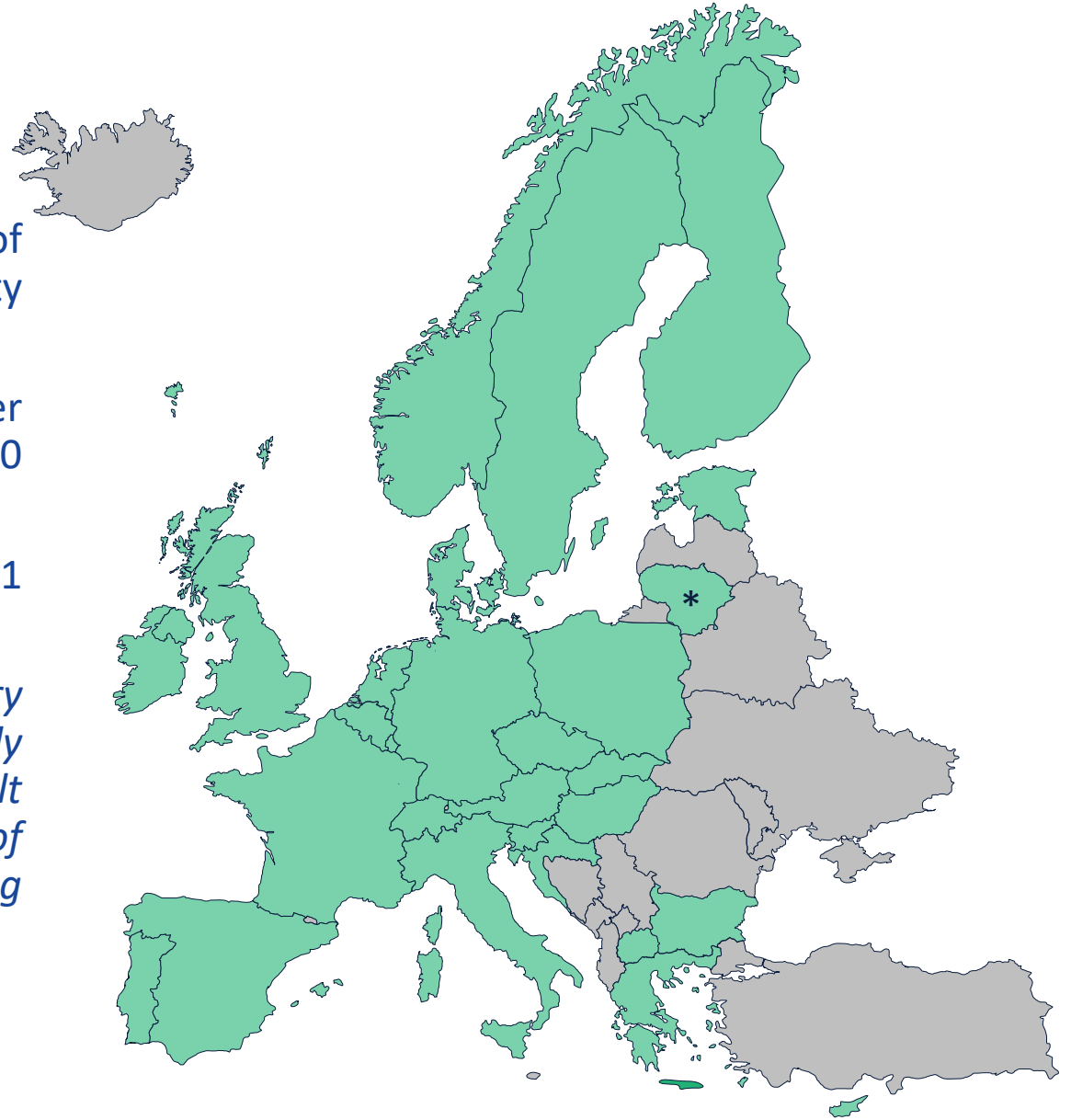


Negative impact on  
**citizens' trust**

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# Methods

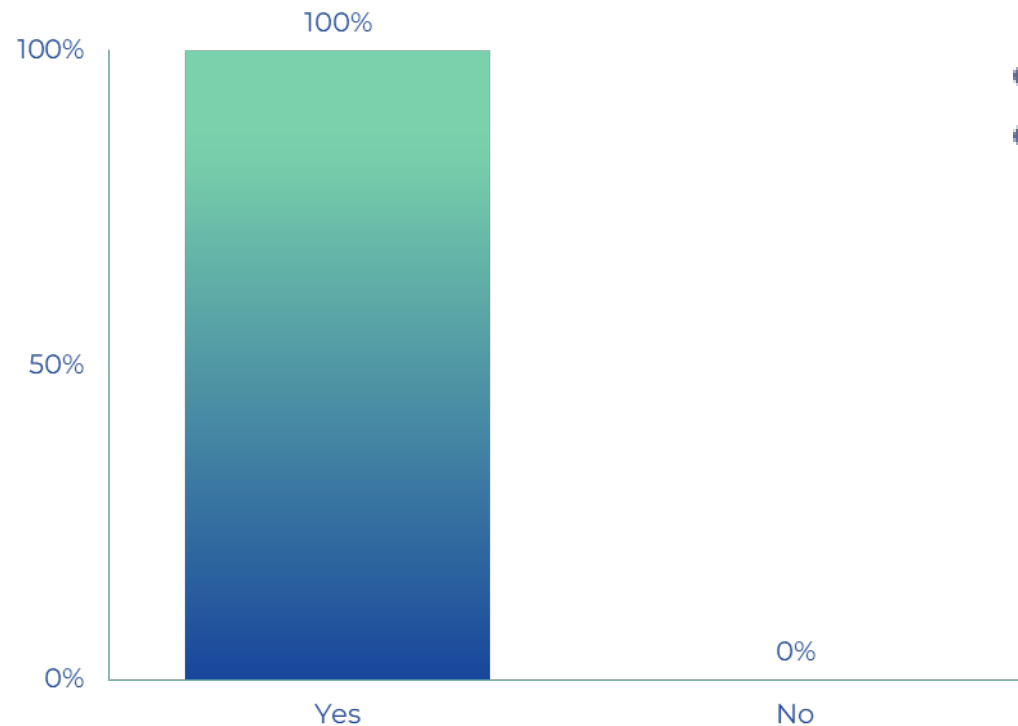
- Every year PGEU surveys its members to map the impact of medicine shortages in Europe from the community pharmacists' perspective.
- The 2024 Survey was open to all PGEU member organisations and has been conducted between 20 November 2024 and 24 January 2025.
- A total of 28 PGEU members responded to the survey (1 response per country).
- Definition of medicine shortage harmonized: *every (temporary) inability for a community pharmacy to supply patients with the medicinal product requested as a result of factors beyond their control, requiring the dispensing of an alternative agent or even discontinuation of an ongoing medical therapy.*



# All countries experienced shortages..

**Question 1. In the last 12 months, have you experienced shortages of medicines in community pharmacy in your country?**

(% of responding countries)



- » Over the last 6 years, all surveyed countries have consistently experienced medicine shortages.
- » 100% of responding countries (28) experienced medicine shortages in the last 12 months.

# All countries experienced shortages...

## ...and the situation is stagnating...

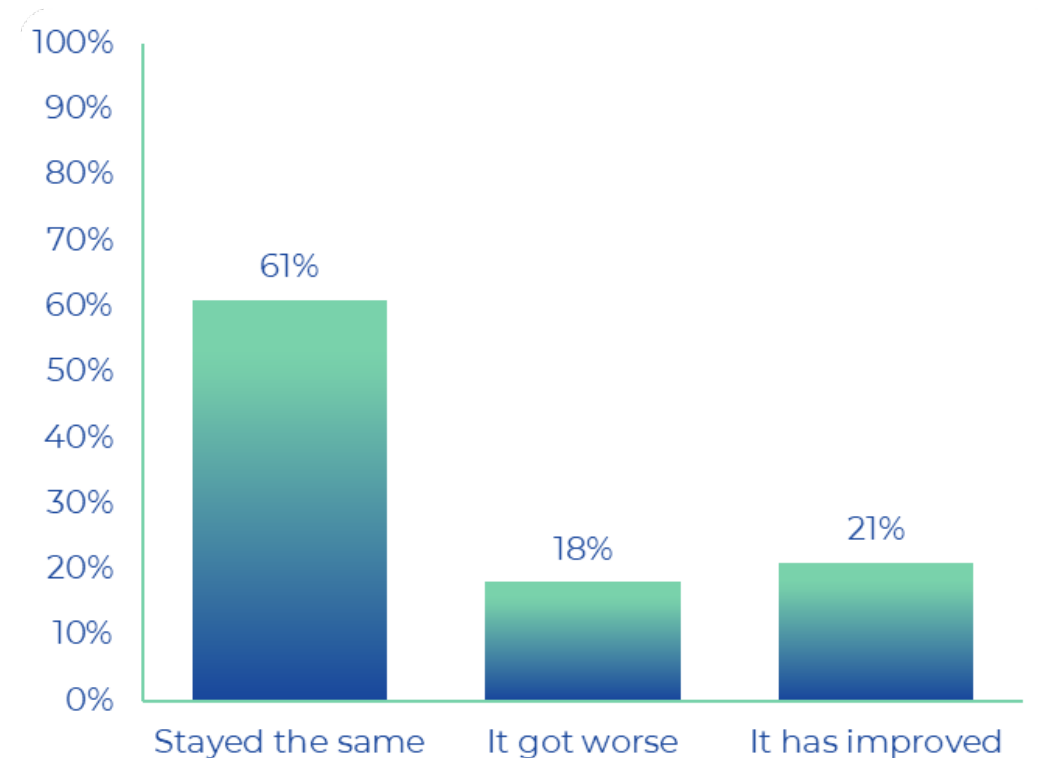
**Question 2.** If you have experienced shortages, how would you compare to the situation in the previous 12 months:

(% of responding countries)

» Compared to the previous 12 months, in 2024, in 17 out of the 28 responding countries (61%) there were no changes in the situation – meaning that the general worsening of the situation registered the year before was maintained.

The situation grew worse in 5 countries, and there were improvements in 6 other countries.

In 2023, 65% of the responding countries said the situation had gotten worse or stayed the same in 23% of the cases.



# Anti-infectives, Respiratory and Cardiovascular medications were the most affected

**Question 3. If you have experienced shortages in the last 12 months in your country, which medicine classes have been in short supply in community pharmacy?**

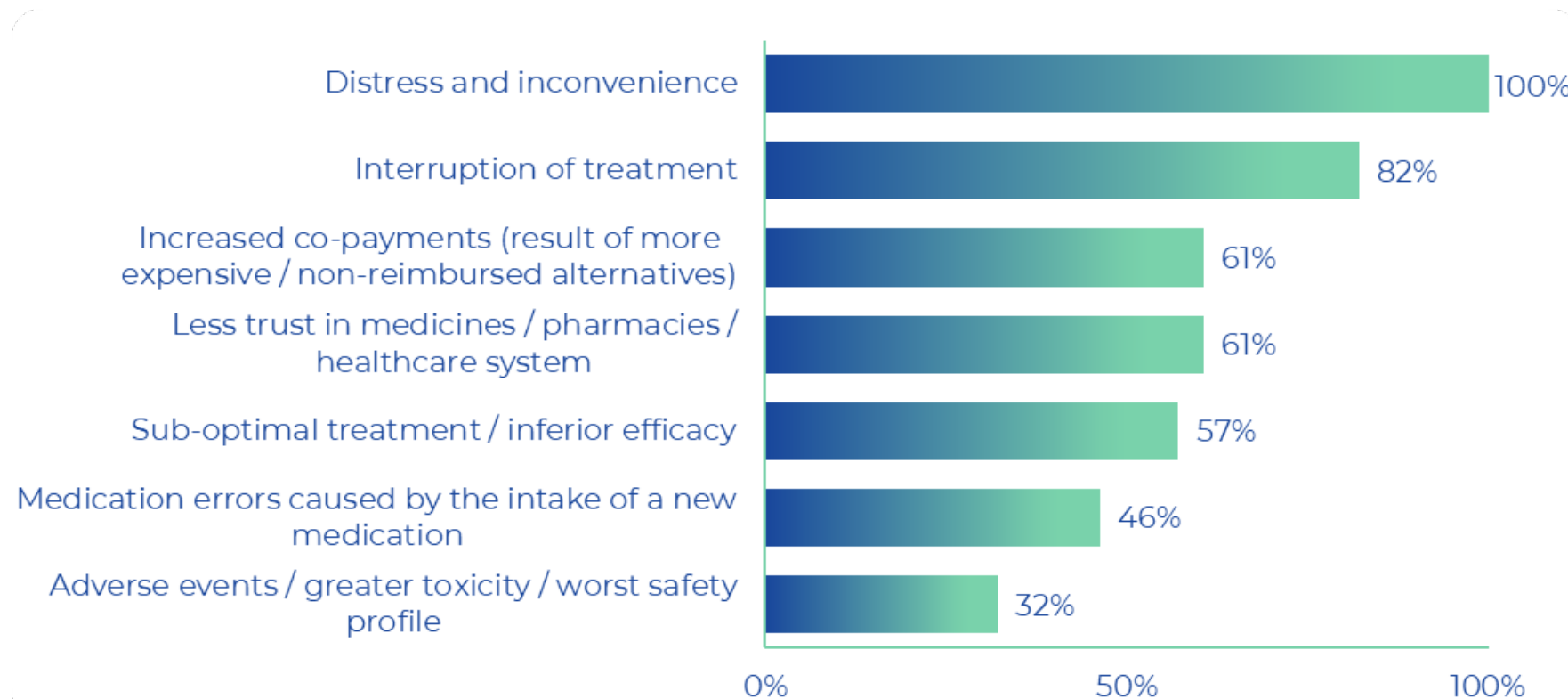
(ATC Level 1, multiple answers per country, % of responding countries)

Medicines	Responding countries (%)
Anti-infectives for systemic use (antibiotics)	96%
Cardiovascular system	96%
Alimentary tract and metabolism	86%
Nervous system	86%
Respiratory system	82%
Systemic hormonal preparations (excl. sex hormones/insulins)	75%
Antineoplastic and immunomodulating agents	75%
Genito-urinary system and sex hormones	71%
Musculo-skeletal system	71%
Dermatologicals	68%
Sensory organs	68%
Blood and blood forming organs	68%
Various	64%
Vaccines	61%
Antiparasitic products, insecticides and repellents	50%

# Impact on patients ranges from distress, inconvenience, interruption of treatment or increased co-payments

Question 7. In your experience, how have medicine shortages adversely affected patients in your country?

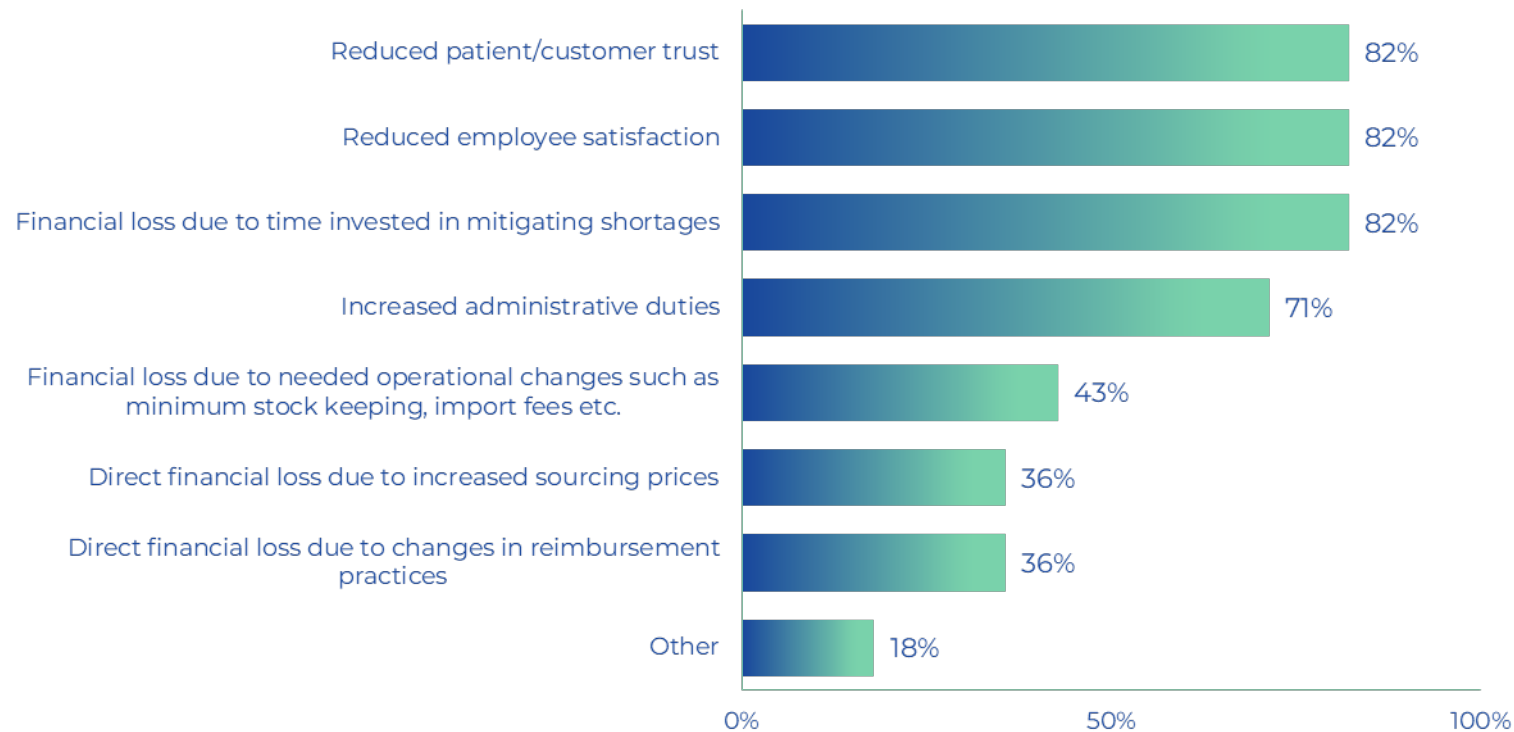
(multiple answers per country, % of responding countries)



# Impact on pharmacies is significant

**Question 8.** In your experience, how have medicine shortages affected community pharmacies in your country?

(multiple answers per country, % of responding countries)



## Slovenia

Pharmacists have an **increased workload** in dealing with medicine shortages. This is an **intensive** and **time-consuming** part of the daily work of pharmacists.

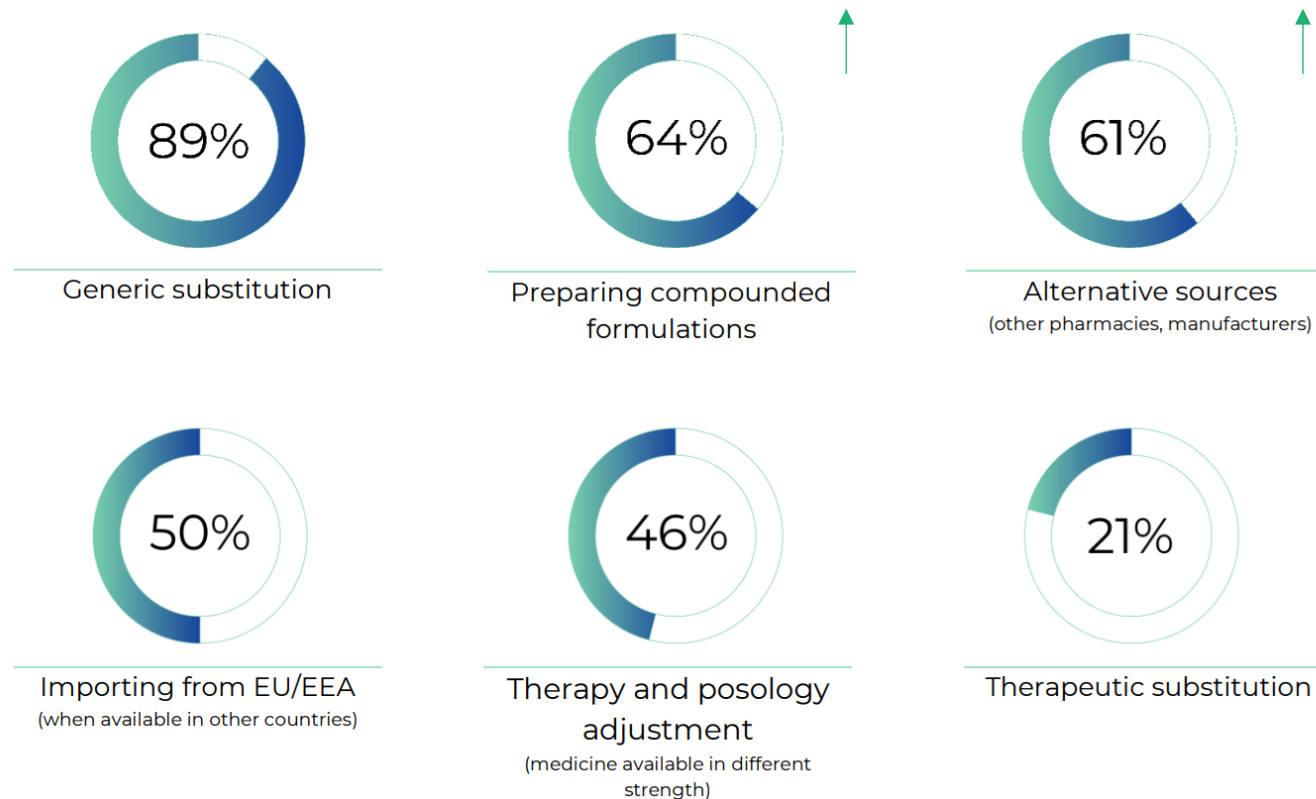


## France

Shortages resulted in **more time invested**, additional **administrative duties**, and **hostility/assault** of patients who do not understand why the medicine cannot be supplied.

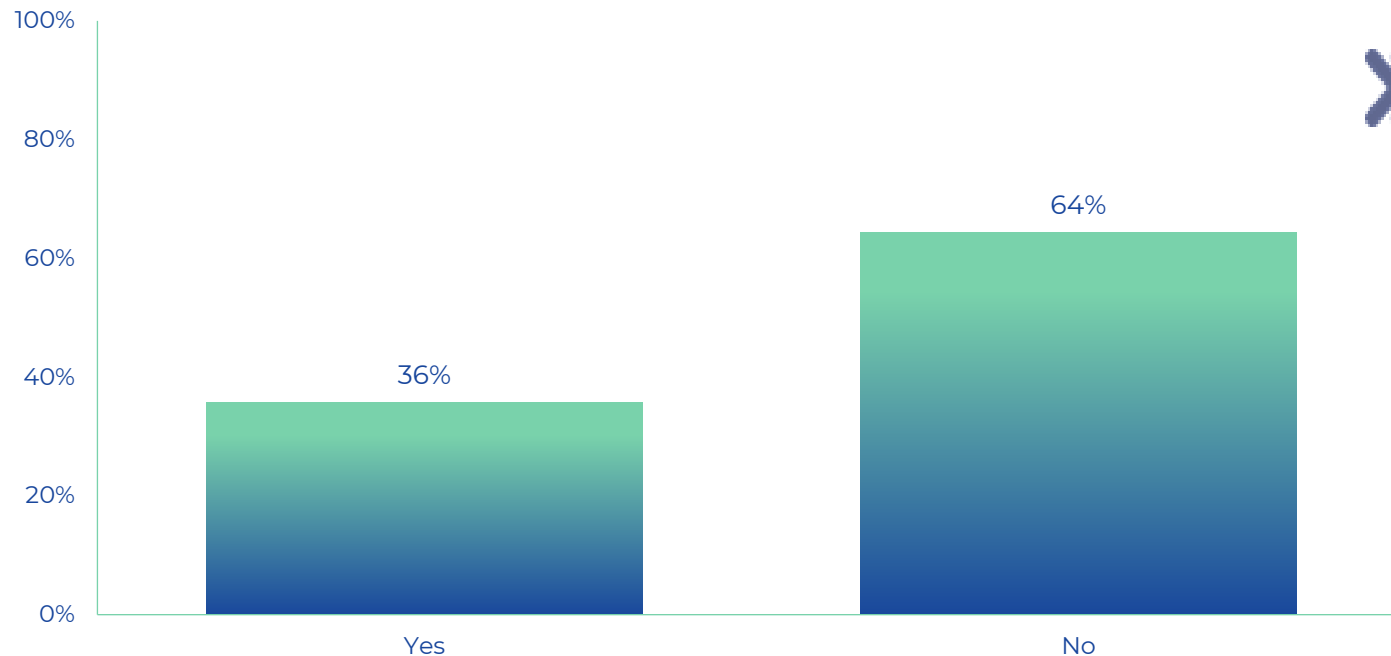
# Existing legal solutions allow pharmacists to find alternatives, but more should be done

**Question 9. Which solutions can legally be offered by pharmacists in case of a shortage?**  
(multiple answers per country, % of responding countries)



# Limited expansion of the scope of practice

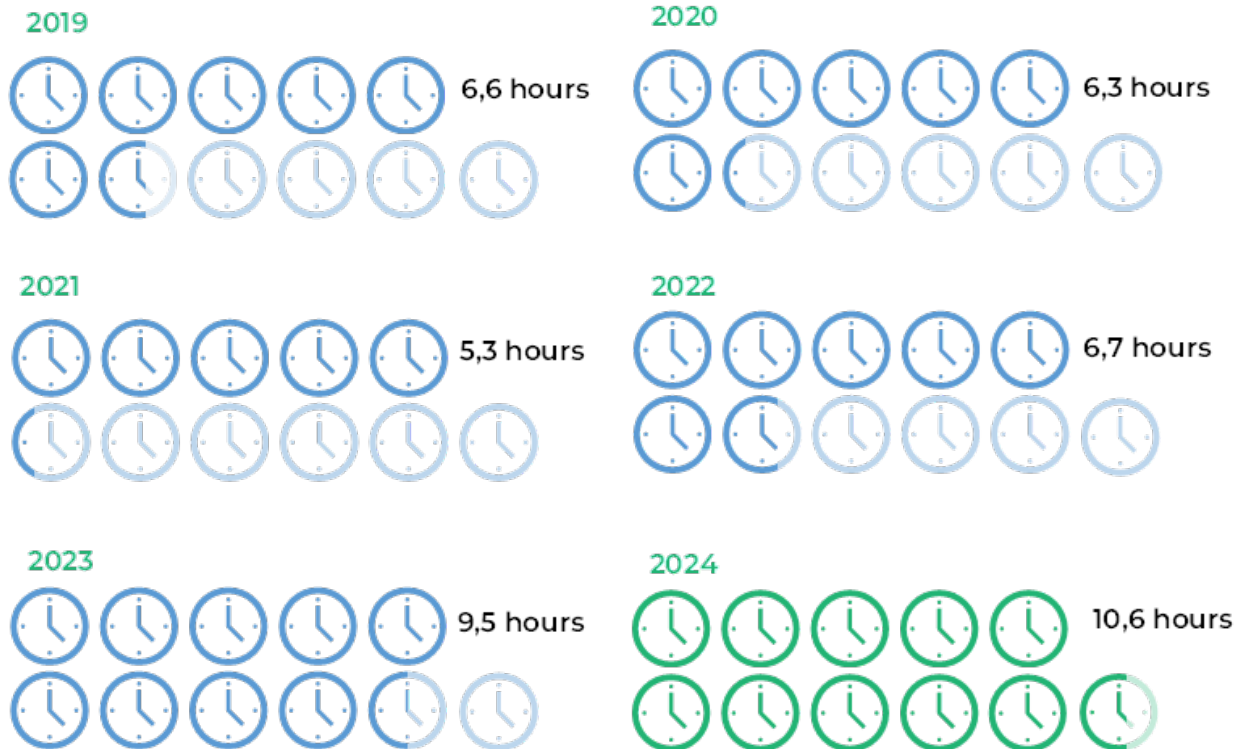
**Question 10. Have you seen an expansion of the legal scope of pharmacy practice to manage shortages in your country over the last 12 months (including regulatory flexibilities, permanent or temporary)? (% of responding countries)**



» At least 6 countries are working on legislative initiatives to grant pharmacists with extended powers to manage medicine shortages, expanding their scope of practice.

# Time spent dealing with shortages has consistently increased

Question 11. On average, per week, how much time does pharmacy staff spend dealing with medicine shortages?



» Time on average spent per week, per pharmacy, dealing with medicine shortages ranges in the different countries, from 1 hour to 40 hours.

# What can healthcare professionals do?

## Pharmacists: Communication, expertise and counselling

- Reassure patients that it is a temporary situation – pharmacists are the healthcare professional closest to the population
- Look for available alternatives and source them
- Substitute, adjust or compound a medicine
- Effective stock management – know your patients and communities
- Prevent stockpiling or medicines hoarding
- Clear communication with authorities

# THANK YOU!

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