



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Freshfel Europe's Consumption Monitor shows that there is still a long way to go to reach the minimum recommendation of 400 g/day of fresh fruit and vegetables

Freshfel Europe's latest edition of the Consumption Monitor indicates that the average fruit and vegetable consumption in the EU grew to 364,58 g/day/capita in 2021. However, this positive trend that started during the coronavirus pandemic has already been curbed by the economic crisis caused by the outbreak of the war in Ukraine. Freshfel Europe stresses the importance of reaching the minimum daily goal of 400 g per capita of fruit and vegetables recommended by the WHO, based on their strong health and environmental benefits.

Freshfel Europe has released today its latest edition of the Consumption Monitor. The report provides a comparison of consumption trends in the EU-27 as a whole and in each Member State based on official statistics from EUROSTAT and FAOSTAT. In the past two decades, the Freshfel Europe Consumption Monitor has become increasingly important in evaluating the trends of fresh fruit and vegetable production, trade, and consumption in Europe. The report, whose look and structure were revamped this year on the occasion of its 20th anniversary, is a unique document looking both at the business development and the evolution of the daily diet of fresh produce in Europe.

This year's edition shows that the average fruit and vegetable consumption in the EU grew to 364,58 g/day/capita in 2021, a 2,19% increase from 2020 and 1,27% above the average of the previous five years. This is still, however, almost 10% below the minimum 400 g/day/capita recommended by the WHO. In 2021, the EU-27 fresh produce market size reached 74.354.475 T. This growth is in line with the positive trend that started in 2020 with the COVID-19 pandemic, which has changed the lifestyle of Europeans, in addition to increasing their sympathy towards environmental causes and climate change. However, fruit and vegetable consumption has become under pressure in Europe because of the economic crisis following the outbreak of the war in Ukraine in 2022. This is severely impacting consumer purchasing power and limiting their food expenditure. Philippe Binard, General Delegate of Freshfel Europe commented: *"In times of crisis, consumers tend to move towards a less healthy diet, which is perceived to be more energy satisfactory and a cheaper food option than fruit and vegetables. The 2022 and early 2023 trends clearly indicate that the post-pandemic consumption growth has been lost, as consumption has declined by more than 10% in many cases. These latest developments, which are not yet incorporated into this year's Consumption Monitor, will be confirmed in the upcoming editions"*.

The Freshfel Europe Consumption Monitor released today confirms that only a few countries in the EU reach the recommended goal of at least 400g of fresh fruits and vegetables/day/capita. Despite the growth in consumption in 2021, more needs to be done to stimulate consumption, in particular in light of the latest developments.

Freshfel Europe believes there can be no compromise on the urgency of actions needed to address the consumption challenge. The fruit and vegetable sector should keep building on the momentum of increased consumption based on the benefits of fresh fruit and vegetables for the planet, the climate, and the health of the consumers themselves. This is also reflected by the current priorities on the European agenda, such as the Green Deal, the Farm to Fork Strategy, the FIT55 target, the Circular Economy Action Plan, as well as Europe's Beating Cancer Plan where fruits and vegetables are not part of the problem but part of the solution. Fresh produce must be recognised as essential products.



On the way forward, Freshfel is also concerned that, according to a 2019 EUROSTAT survey, 33% of EU consumers consume zero portions of fruit and vegetables each day, and another 55% do not reach the five recommended portions per day. A further source of concern is that the lowest consumption rates are seen amongst the younger generations and in lower-income households. This is a concerning situation according to Mr. Binard, who states that: *“The younger generations are the consumers of tomorrow, and more efforts must be made to educate and introduce young people to the versatility and qualities of fresh fruits and vegetables”*.

Fruit and vegetables have many assets and are an affordable food option for European consumers. However, despite the momentum to move towards a plant diet, a number of misperceptions create obstacles to consumption. Freshfel Europe President Salvo Laudani commented: *“We need to counter the misperception that fruits and vegetables are expensive. The sector needs to reinforce its message to demonstrate that it operates within a sustainable food systems format to deliver affordable, nutritional and healthy products in order to move consumers towards a plant diet”*. Boosting consumption and reaching the recommended 400g/day/capita by adding one piece of fruit or vegetables to the daily diet of European consumers would boost the European market size by almost 20% or 15 million T. For the consumer, a healthy diet that reaches the minimum recommendation remains affordable and can be achieved for less than 2 €/day.

The Freshfel Consumption Monitor is available for Freshfel members but can be purchased by non-members at a cost of 2.500 €. For all queries, please contact Gil Kaufman g.kaufman@freshfel.org.

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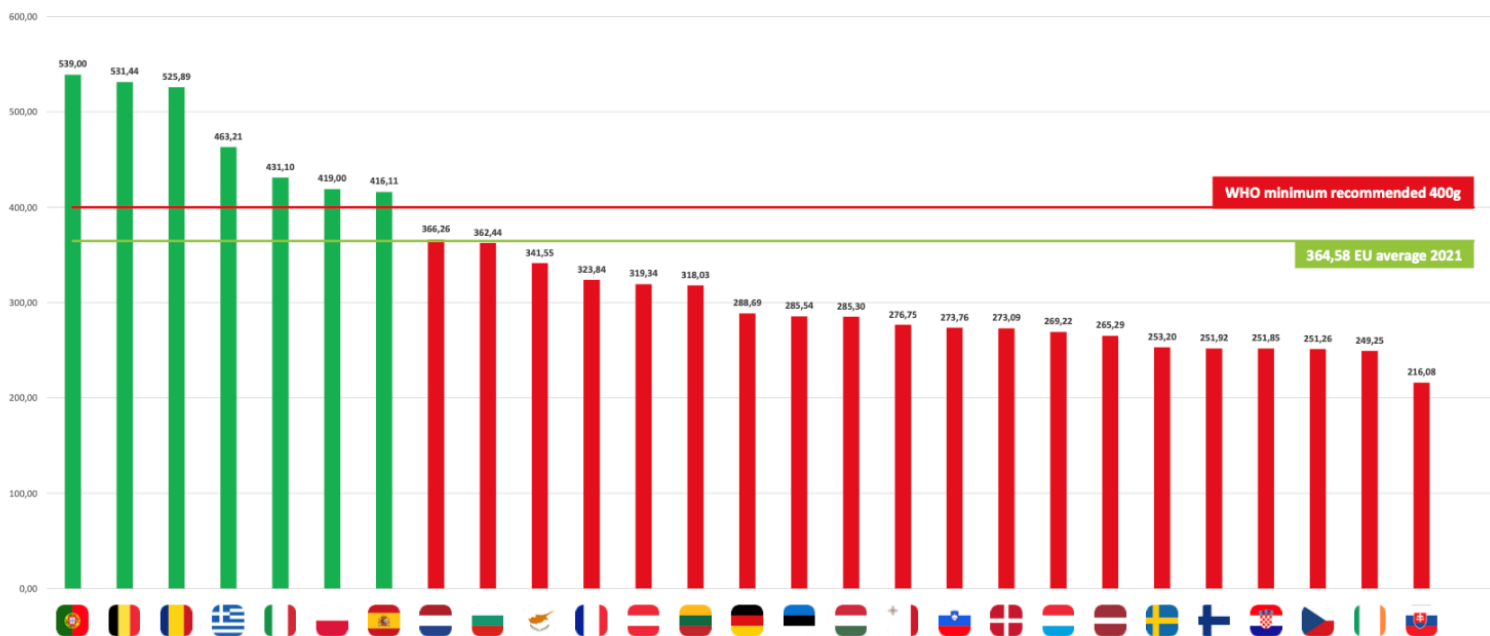
Note to the Editors: Freshfel Europe is the European Fresh Produce Association, representing the interests of the fresh fruit and vegetables supply chain in Europe and beyond. Freshfel Europe currently has over 200 members, including both companies and associations. For more information, please contact info@freshfel.org





The Freshfel Europe Consumption Monitor 2023, based on official statistics from EUROSTAT and FAOSTAT. For the past decade, the document has become increasingly important in evaluating the trends of fresh fruit and vegetable production, trade, and consumption in Europe. The report, whose look and structure were revamped this year, is a unique document looking both at the business development and the evolution of the daily diet of fresh produce in Europe.

Av. consumption (g/capita/day)

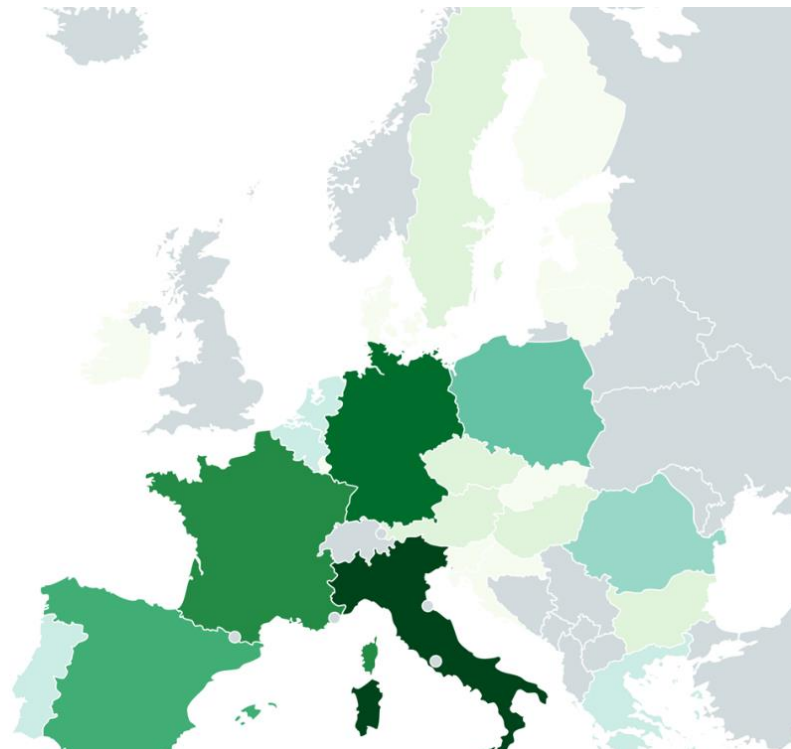


Member State (T)	Average consumption (g/capita/day) 2020	Average consumption (g/capita/day) 2021	% 2020/2021
Portugal	490,30	539,00	9,93%
Belgium	519,55	531,44	2,29%
Romania	503,33	525,89	4,48%
Greece	486,62	463,21	-4,81%
Italy	443,49	431,10	-2,80%
Poland	407,29	419,00	2,88%
Spain	377,5	416,11	10,23%
Netherlands	327,65	366,26	11,78%
Total	356,77	364,58	2,19%
Bulgaria	330,08	362,44	9,80%
Cyprus	329,44	341,55	3,68%
France	309,03	323,84	4,79%
Austria	326,39	319,34	-2,16%
Lithuania	299,12	318,03	6,32%
Germany	296,61	288,69	-2,67%
Estonia	285,78	285,54	-0,09%
Hungary	268,80	285,30	6,14%
Malta	245,91	276,75	12,54%
Slovenia	349,88	273,76	-21,76%
Denmark	258,24	273,09	5,75%
Luxembourg	276,89	269,22	-2,77%
Latvia	299,11	265,29	-11,31%
Sweden	257,17	253,2	-1,54%
Finland	261,22	251,92	-3,56%
Croatia	252,12	251,85	-0,11%
Czech Republic	247,35	251,26	1,58%
Ireland	254,46	249,25	-2,05%
Slovakia	218,28	216,08	-1,01%



Although fresh fruit and vegetable consumption increased in 2021, the vast majority of the EU countries and their citizens are far from the 400 g/day/capita recommended by the WHO

Member State (T)	Market size 2020	Market size 2021	% 2020/2021
Total	72.839.533	74.354.475	2,08%
Italy	12.068.051	11.651.020	-3,46%
Germany	11.254.783	10.952.734	-2,68%
France	9.515.250	9.996.352	5,06%
Spain	8.152.309	8.998.717	10,38%
Poland	7.053.621	7.233.840	2,55%
Romania	4.438.718	4.607.176	3,80%
Netherlands	2.602.271	2.920.224	12,22%
Belgium	2.731.356	2.801.681	2,57%
Portugal	2.303.167	2.532.520	9,96%
Greece	2.379.744	2.256.827	-5,17%
Austria	1.325.513	1.301.481	-1,81%
Hungary	1.198.126	1.266.656	5,72%
Czech Republic	1.206.852	1.203.087	-0,31%
Sweden	1.211.791	1.199.059	-1,05%
Bulgaria	1.046.888	1.143.740	9,25%
Denmark	686.058	727.661	6,06%
Finland	658.514	636.051	-3,41%
Ireland	576.356	569.319	-1,22%
Slovakia	543.544	538.264	-0,97%
Croatia	466.814	463.811	-0,64%
Lithuania	381.318	405.653	6,38%
Slovenia	334.569	263.418	-21,27%
Latvia	260.335	229.151	-11,98%
Estonia	173.283	173.277	0,00%
Cyprus	133.472	139.626	4,61%
Luxembourg	79.097	77.964	-1,43%
Malta	57.731	65.166	12,88%



The EU fresh fruit and vegetable market size also increased to reach 74.354.475 T in 2021.

