

# Facts & Figures 2024

MedTech Europe stands at the forefront of delivering up-to-date information within the medical industry.

This booklet is a unique, robust and reliable source of information on the state of the sector.



# Table of contents

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What is medical technology	3
Regulations	6
Innovation	8
Digital health	10
Employment	12
Companies	14
Expenditure on medical technology	15
Medtech market in Europe	16
Trade in Europe	23
About MedTech Europe	28
Scope of this report	29
References	30

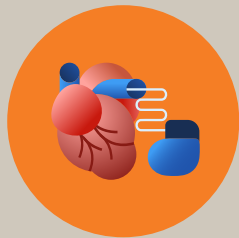
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# What is medical technology

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Medical technologies are products, services or solutions used to *save and improve people's lives*. In their many forms, they are with you from prevention to diagnosis and cure. There are three main categories of medical technologies:



## Medical Devices (MDs)

Are products, services or solutions that prevent, diagnose, monitor, treat and care for people.



## In-vitro diagnostics (IVDs)

Are non-invasive tests used on biological samples (for example, blood, urine or tissues) to determine the status of a person's health.



## Digital health

Are tools and services that use information and communication technologies (ICTs) to improve prevention, diagnosis, treatment, monitoring and management of a person's health and lifestyle.



There are more than

**2.000.000**

medical technologies, categorized into more than 7,000 generic devices groups<sup>1</sup>, available in hospitals, community care settings and at home.

Medical technologies can be everyday objects such as sticking plasters, syringes, surgical masks, and latex gloves, as well as spectacles, wheelchairs, COVID-19 tests and medical apps. Medical technologies also include total body scanners, gene mutation tests, implantable devices such as heart valves and pacemakers, and replacement joints for knees and hips.

*You may not always notice  
medical technologies, but they are  
always there for you.*



Medical technologies provide value in different ways. They allow people to *live longer and better lives*. At the same time, medical technologies improve the quality of care, and the efficiency and sustainability of healthcare systems.

# Regulations

In the European Union, medical technologies are tightly regulated by laws that govern the safety and performance of devices across their lifetime, before and after they are placed on the market. The European medical technology sector is currently transitioning from being regulated under the medical devices and IVD directives to two new regulations.

## Classification of *In Vitro* Diagnostic Medical Devices

The *In Vitro* Diagnostic (IVD) sector is regulated by Regulation 2017/746/EU.

*Classification of IVDs is important as it determines the level of involvement by a third party (the “notified body”) in assessing IVDs both pre- and post-market. This level of control generally reflects the risk of an incorrect result from the test.*

Under the IVD Regulation, all IVDs are classified under a risk-based classification system according to the risk the device poses to the health of the public and or an individual as result of an incorrect test result. All IVDs are classified as class A, B, C or D, with class D being the highest risk class.

IVD Regulation classification system

Percentage of devices by class<sup>2</sup>

<b>D</b>	<b>High public health risk</b> e.g. blood safety / fast spreading, deadly infectious agents	4%
<b>C</b>	<b>High risk for individual patients</b> e.g. cancer markers, dangerous infectious diseases	26%
<b>B</b>	<b>Medium risk for individual patients</b> e.g. blood chemistry, pregnancy tests	49%
<b>A</b>	<b>Low risk for individual patients</b> e.g. instruments, specimen collection systems,	21%

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## Classification of Medical Devices

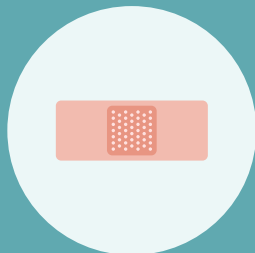
Since 26 May 2021, the medical device (MD) sector is regulated by Regulation (EU) 2017/745, (MDR).

*Classification of medical devices drives many pre- and post-market requirements. Due to the large variety of products, the level of control before placing them on the market depends on the level of impact on the human body that their use might imply. The same notified body is involved post-market to ensure the continued safety and performance of medical devices.*

Under the **MD Regulation**, MDs are classified into 4 classes following a risk-based classification system, which links the class of the device to the potential risk posed to the patient's health as a result of a fault of performance.

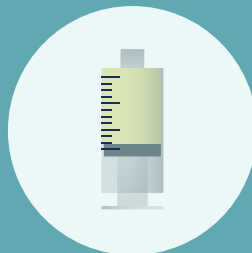
All MDs are classified as class I, IIA, IIB or III, with class III being the highest risk class.

### Class I



e.g. simple bandages or wound care products

### Class IIa



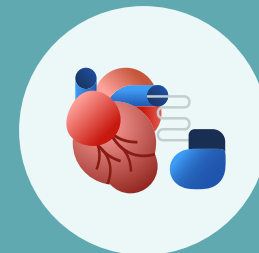
e.g. syringes for pump infusion

### Class IIb



e.g. anaesthesia machines

### Class III



e.g. pacemakers

# Innovation

Medical technology is characterised by a constant flow of innovations, which are the results of a high level of research and development within the industry, and of close co-operation with users. The average global R&D investment rate (R&D spend as a percentage of sales) is estimated to be around 8% in the medical technology sector<sup>2</sup>. Many products have a lifecycle of only 18-24 months before an improved product becomes available.

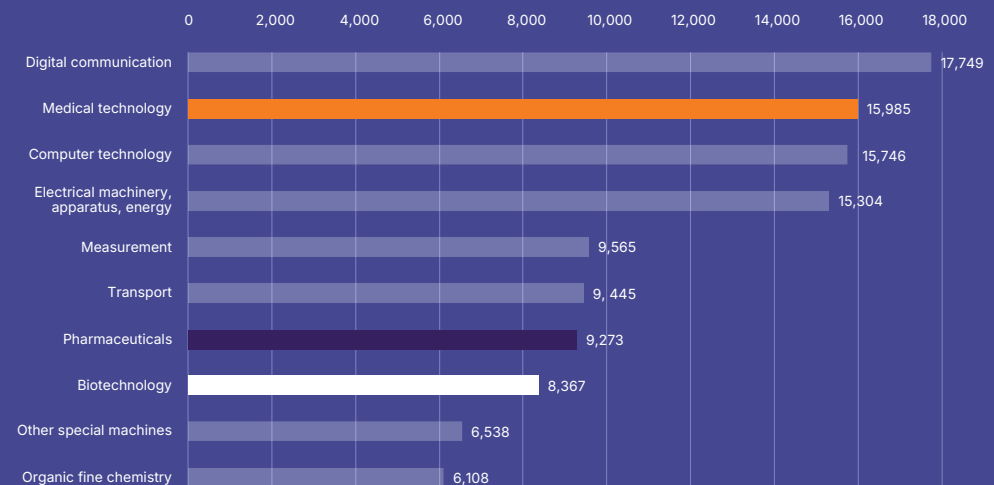
In 2023, more than 15,900 patent applications were filed with the European Patent Office (EPO) in the field of medical technology, representing a 1.3% growth in patent applications compared to the previous year<sup>3</sup>. The medical technology field accounts for 8% of the total number of applications, the 2nd highest among all industrial sectors in Europe, after the Digital communication sector. 40% of these patent applications were filed from EPO countries (including EU27, UK, Norway and Switzerland), 38% from the US and the remaining 22% originated from other countries.

In comparison, around 9,300 applications were filed in the pharmaceutical field and around 8,400 in the field of biotechnology. While over the last two decades the number of EPO filings in the field of medical technology has almost tripled, pharma and biotech patent applications remained relatively stagnant. Furthermore, the ratio of granted patents to patent applications in medical technology field stands at 57% in 2023. In contrast, the same ratio is circa 30% and 21% in pharmaceutical and biotechnology field respectively (Graph 2).

## Graph 1

### Top 10 technical fields in patent applications

Number of patent applications filed with EPO, 2023 (ref. 3)

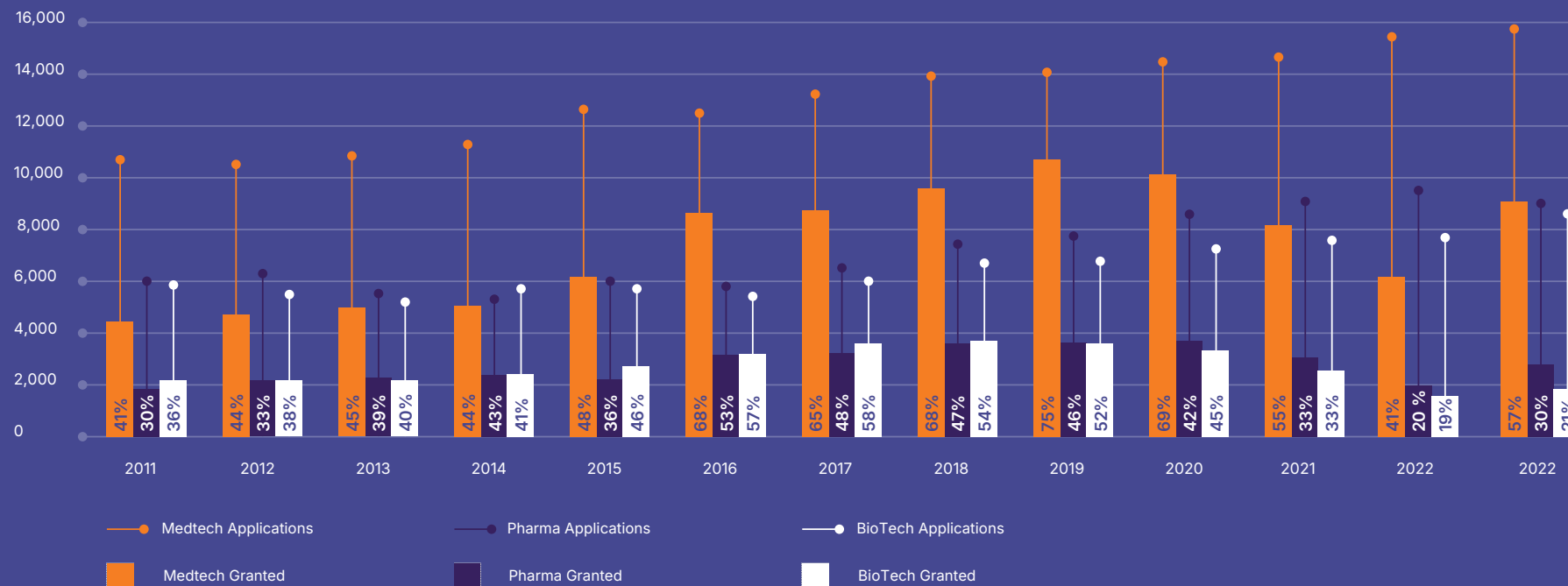




## Graph 2

### Evolution of European patent applications and granted patents by technical field

2023 (ref 3.)



# Digital health

In terms of breakthrough technologies, the digital health sector is increasingly being recognised for the prominent technological innovations that could address many of the underlying challenges in healthcare.

In 2023 biggest European markets, Germany and France, reimbursed 57 and 56 digital health technologies, respectively.<sup>4</sup>



**57** digital health technologies reimbursed in Germany

**56** digital health technologies reimbursed in France





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These products comprise more than 15 categories ranging from therapeutic purposes to remote medical monitoring, and cover a large spectrum of fields *from mental health and respiratory system to oncology and diabetes*. It was possible to achieve these important numbers in virtue of dedicated digital health reimbursement pathways operating at national level.

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# Employment

The European medical technology industry employs directly more than 880,000 people<sup>5</sup>. Germany had the highest absolute number of people employed in the medical technology sector, while the number of medical technology employees per capita is highest in Ireland and Switzerland. In comparison, the European pharmaceutical industry employs around 900,000 people<sup>6</sup>.

The jobs created by the medical technology industry account for around 0.36% of total employment in Europe<sup>7</sup>. These jobs are also highly productive, as the value added per employee is estimated to reach around €177,000 per employee. These indicators show that the medical technology industry has an important economic and societal impact in Europe.



**880,000+**  
employees<sup>4</sup>

### Graph 3

Top 10 countries in Europe with highest direct employment in the medical technology industry

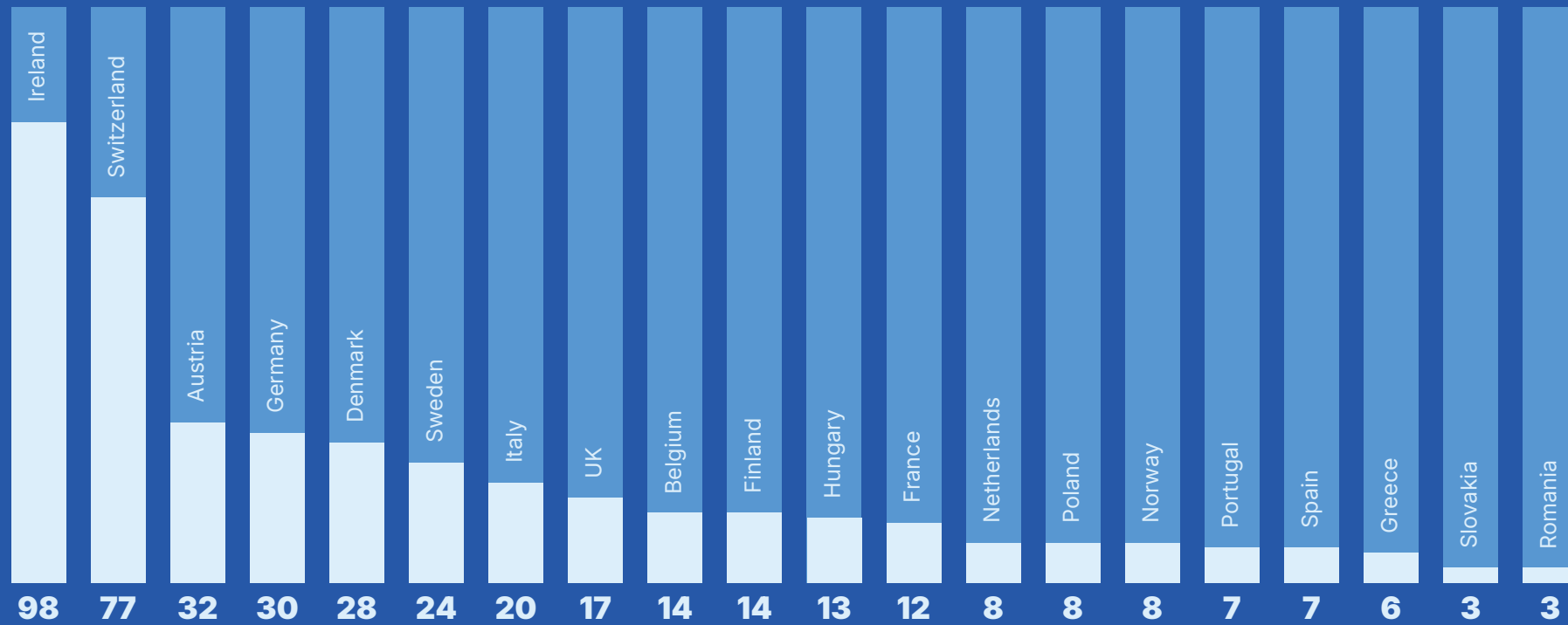
Latest year available (ref. 4)

Country	Employment
Germany	257,000
Italy	117,607
United Kingdom	117,200
France	84,000
Switzerland	67,500
Ireland	48,000
Spain	32,000
Poland	30,000
Austria	29,026
Sweden	25,600

#### Graph 4

Number of people directly employed in the medical technology industry per 10,000 inhabitants

Latest year available (ref. 5)



# Companies

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There are more than 37,000 medical technology companies in Europe. The highest number of them are based in Germany, followed by Italy, the UK, Poland, Sweden and Switzerland. Small and medium-sized companies (SMEs) make up around 90% of the medical technology industry, the majority of which employs less than 50 people (small and micro-sized companies)<sup>5</sup>.



**37,000**

medical technology  
companies in Europe

**90% SMEs**

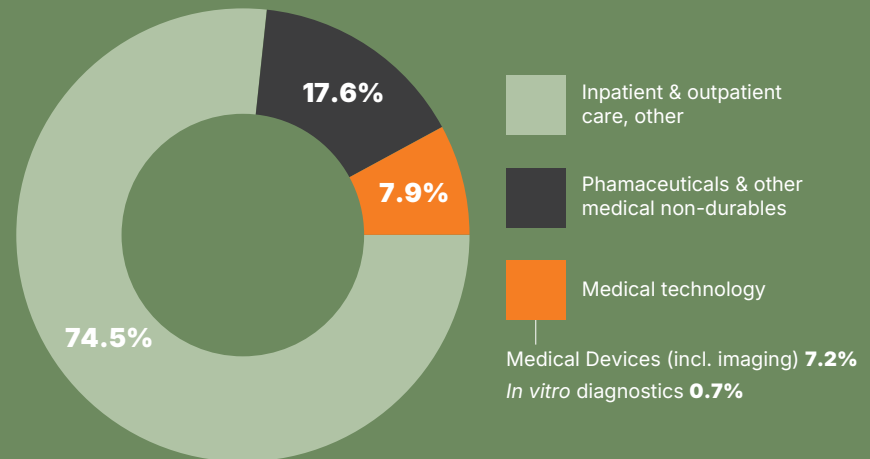


# Expenditure on medical technology

In Europe, an average of approximately 11% of gross domestic product (GDP) is spent on healthcare. Of this figure, around 7.9% is attributed to medical technologies, i.e. less than 1% of GDP. The spending on medical technology is estimated to vary significantly across European countries, ranging from around 5% to 12% of the total healthcare expenditure. Expenditure on medical technology per capita in Europe is at around €304.\*



**€304** expenditure on medical technology per capita in Europe  
**11% of GDP** spent on healthcare



\* MedTech Europe calculation based on sources 5-10.

# Medtech market in Europe

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The European medical technology market is estimated at roughly €160 billion in 2023.<sup>10,11</sup> The top five biggest markets are Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Italy, and Spain. Based upon manufacturer prices, the European medical device market is estimated to make up 26.1% of the world market. It is the second largest medical device market after the US (47.2%).<sup>10</sup>

**€160**  
**billion**  
market



**26.1%**  
of world market

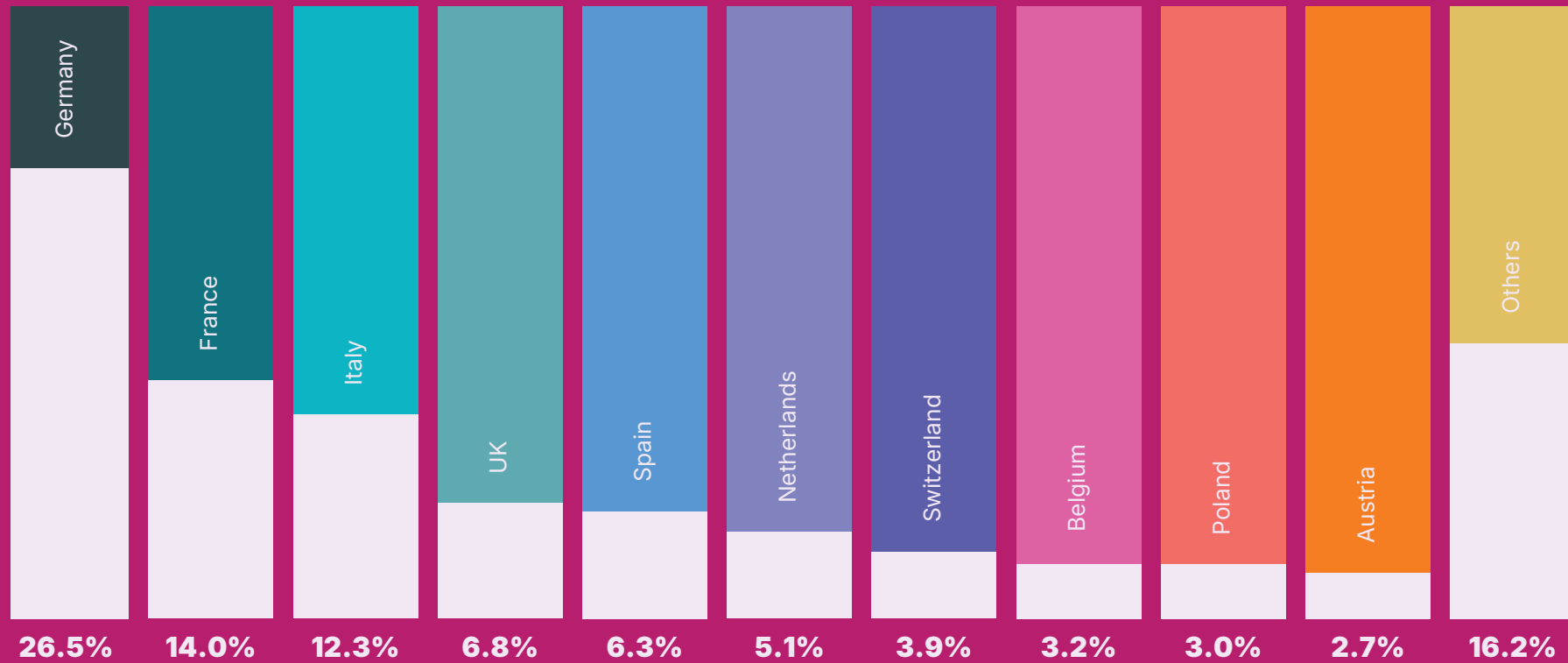
**2nd** largest  
market after US



**Graph 6**

European medical device market by country

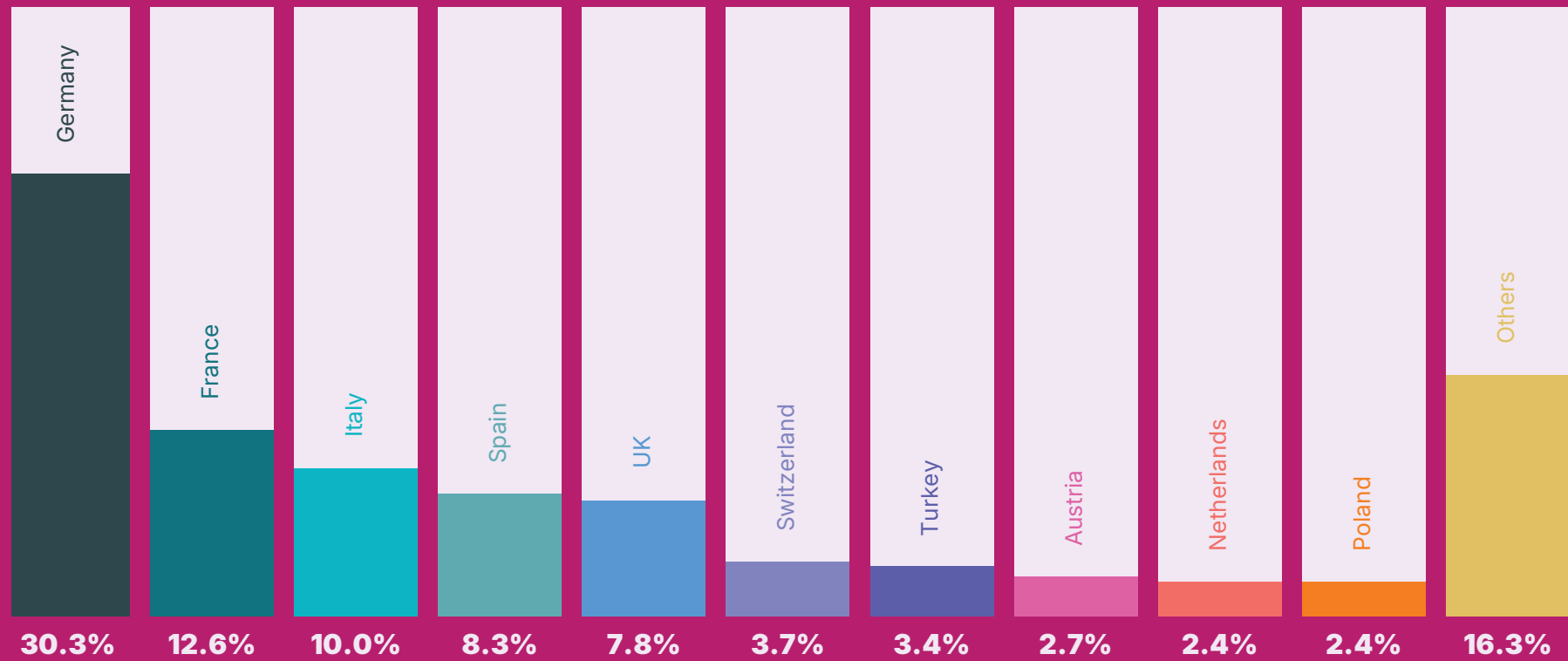
2023 (ref. 9)



**Graph 7**

European IVD market by country

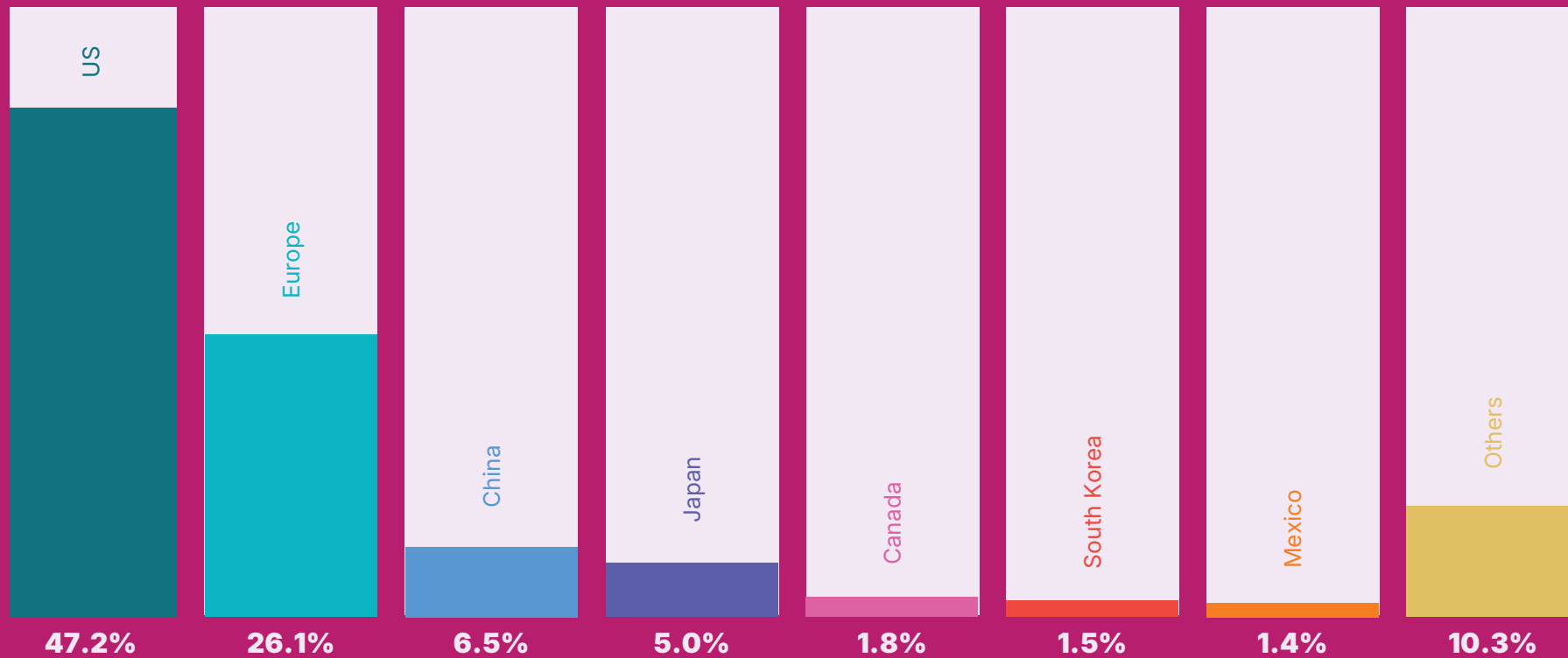
2021 (ref. 8)



**Graph 8**

Europe in the World medical device market, based upon manufacturer prices

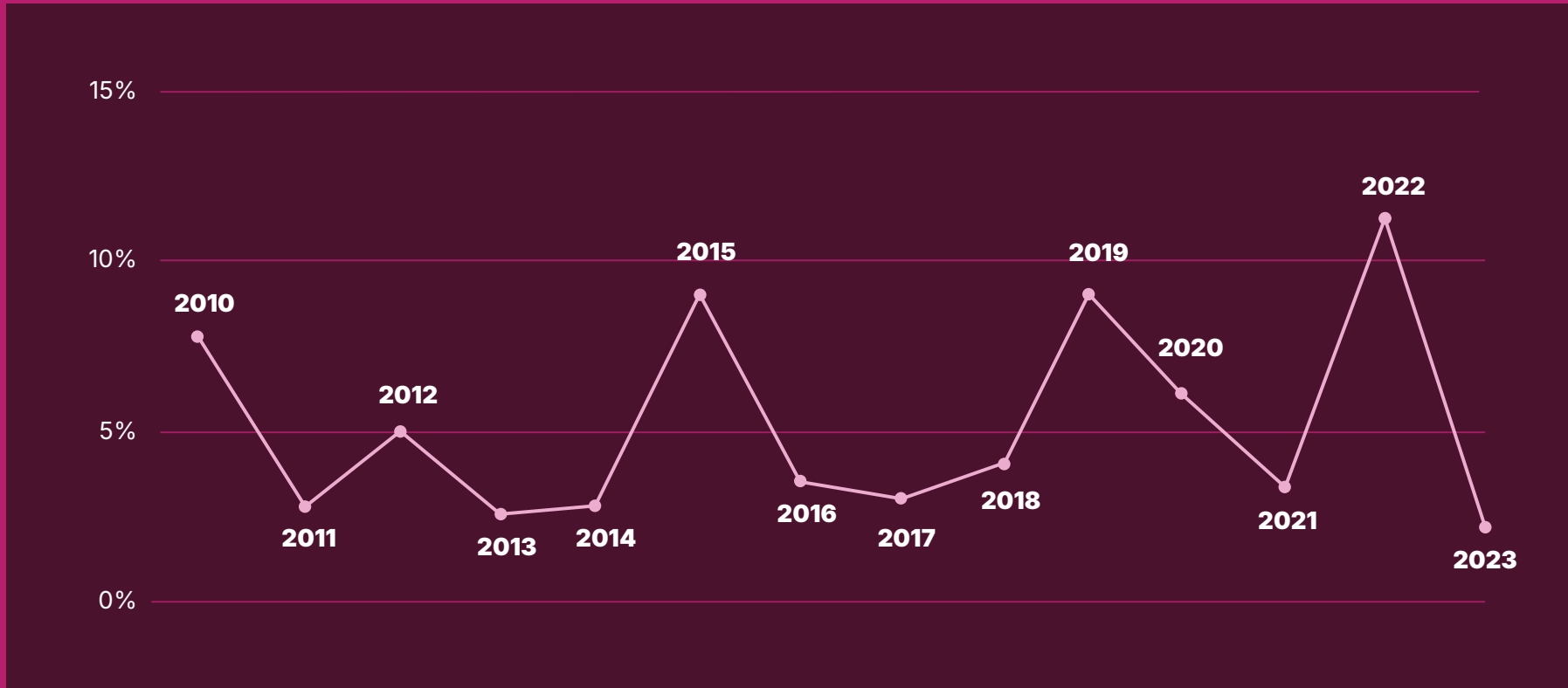
2023 (ref. 9)



### Graph 9

## European medical device market growth rates

2010–2023 (ref. 9)

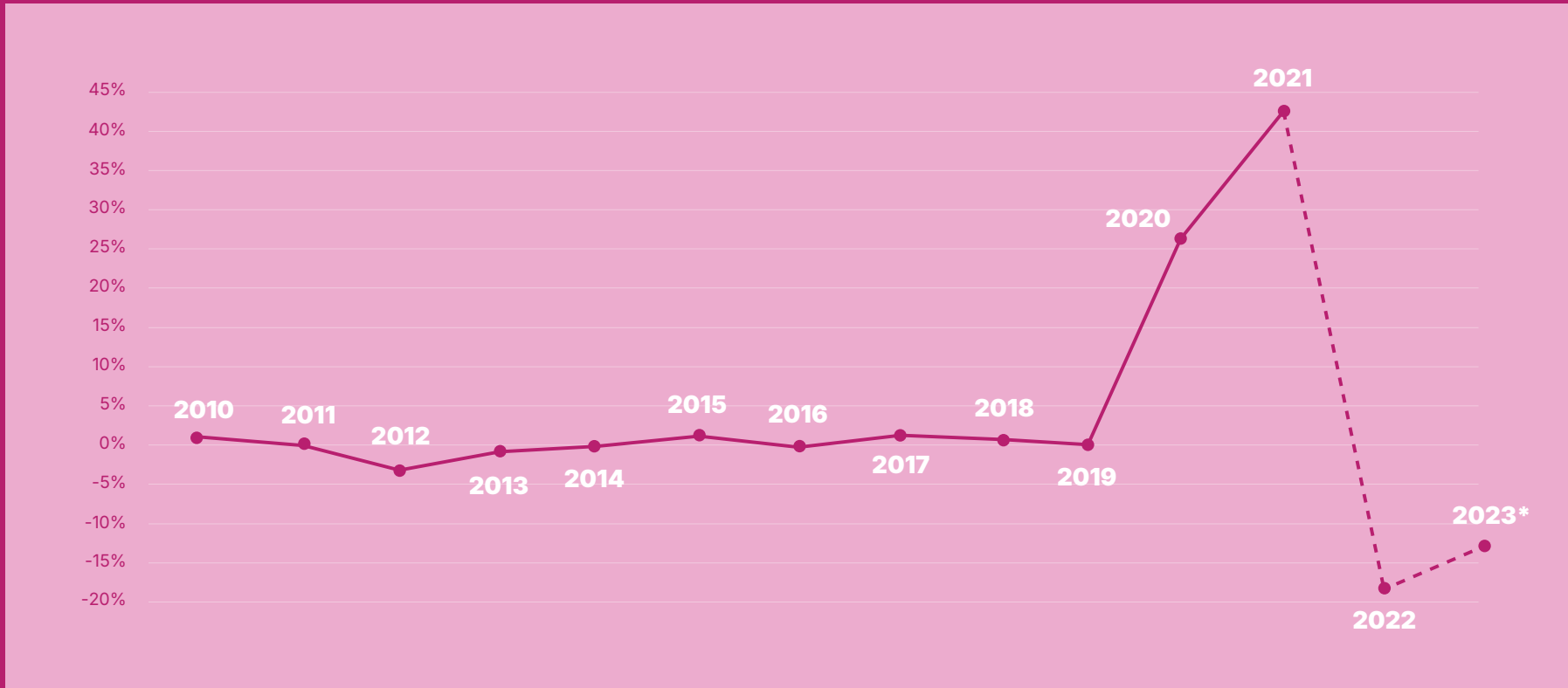


The European medical device market has been growing on average by 5.4% per year over the past 10 years. Demand fell in 2009 due to the economic crisis, resulting in a growth rate of only 1% (the lowest in 14 years). The market regained its momentum in 2010, and since then the annual growth rate has varied between 2.4% (2017) and 9.3% (2015), reaching 2.4% in 2023.<sup>10</sup>

### Graph 10

## European IVD market growth rates

2010–2023 (ref. 8)



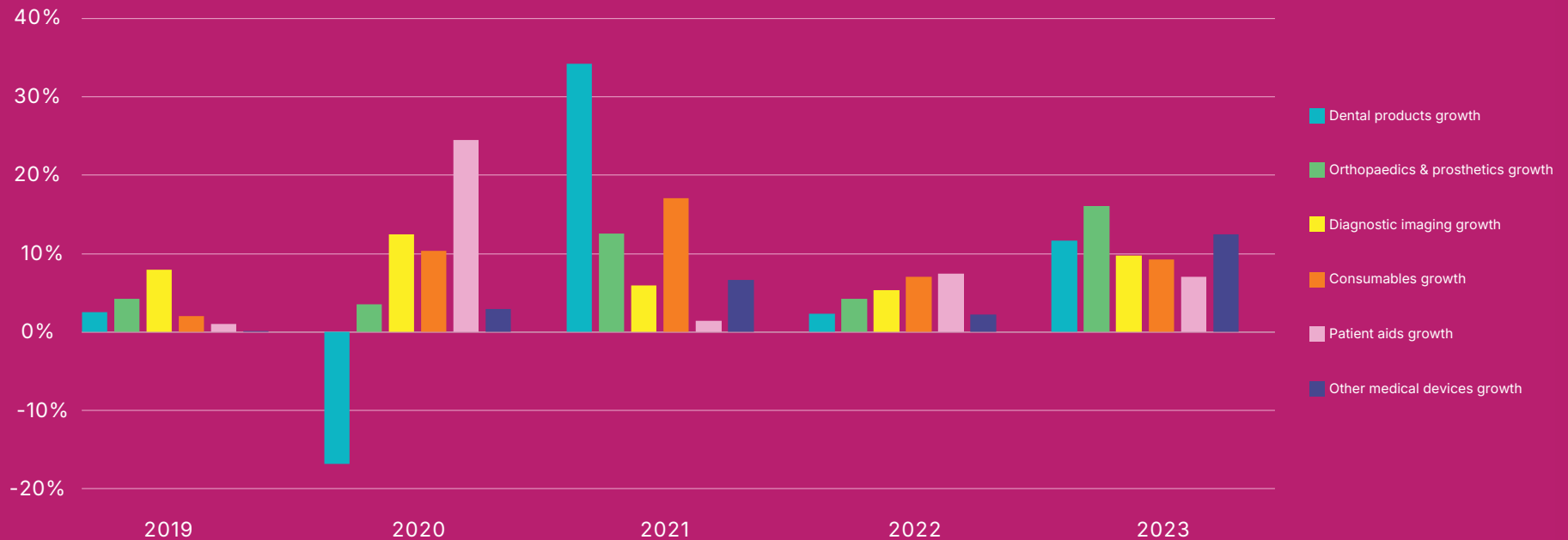
\* Provisional 2023 data

Demand fell in 2009 due to the economic crisis, resulting in a growth rate of only 1%. The market recovered for the European IVD market has been 4.3% on average, hitting the record in 2021.

### Graph 11

#### European medical technology growth rates by sectors

2019–2023 (ref. 9, 10)

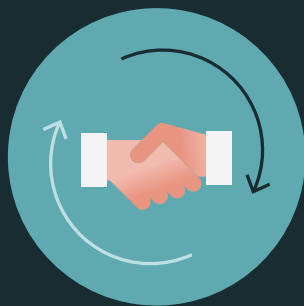


COVID-19 affected the medical technology industry in several ways. Postponement of elective surgeries across EU countries in 2020 led to deferred patient care within the Orthopaedics and Dental fields. In 2023 industry to overcome most of the disruptions caused by the pandemic and return to pre-COVID-19 growth rates.

On the other end of the spectrum, during pandemic sales of IVDs (e.g. PCR tests, see Graph 10), patient aids (artificial respiration apparatus such as ventilators) and consumables (e.g. nasal cannulae, syringes, surgical gloves) increased significantly, as these medical technologies were essential to the special care that severe COVID-19 patients require. In 2023 IVD segment started returning to its natural level.

# Trade in Europe

Europe has a positive medical devices trade balance of 11 billion EUR in 2023.\* The main European medical device trade partners remain the same as in previous years: the US, China, Japan and Mexico.<sup>11</sup>



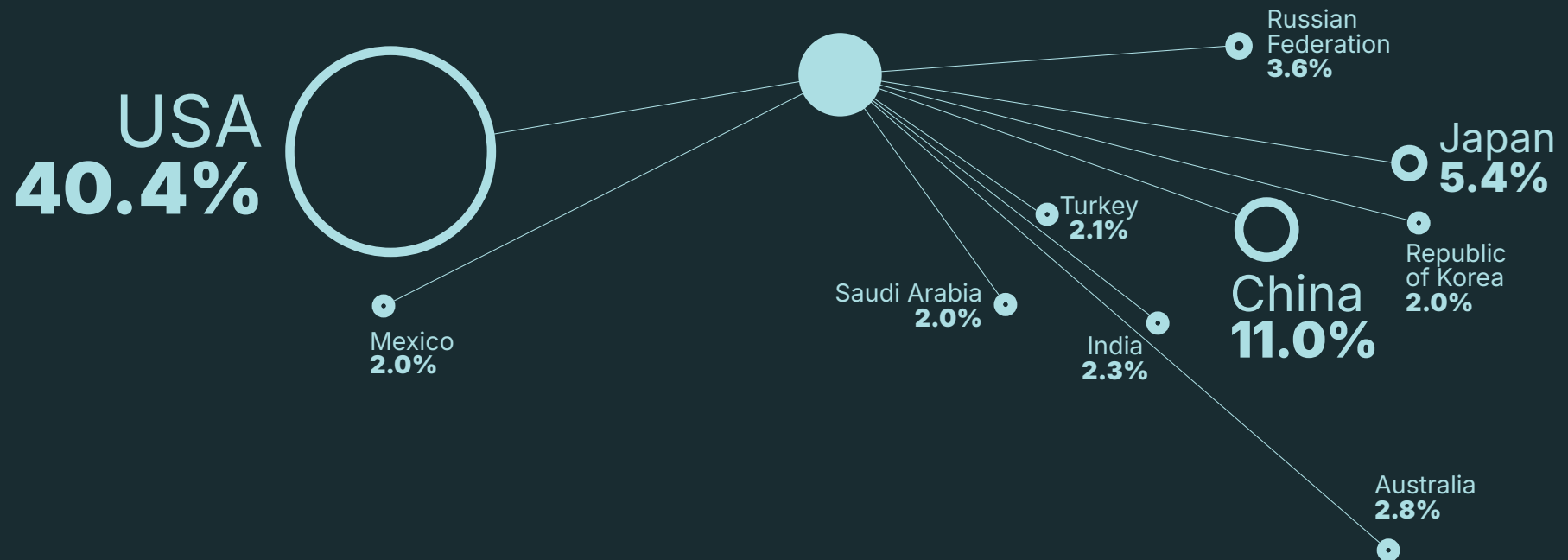
**€11billion**  
of Europe's trade  
surplus in 2023

\*data has been revised after changes in the Harmonized System, methodology and reporting procedures in the data source.

**Graph 12**

Top European medical technology export destinations

2023 (ref. 10)

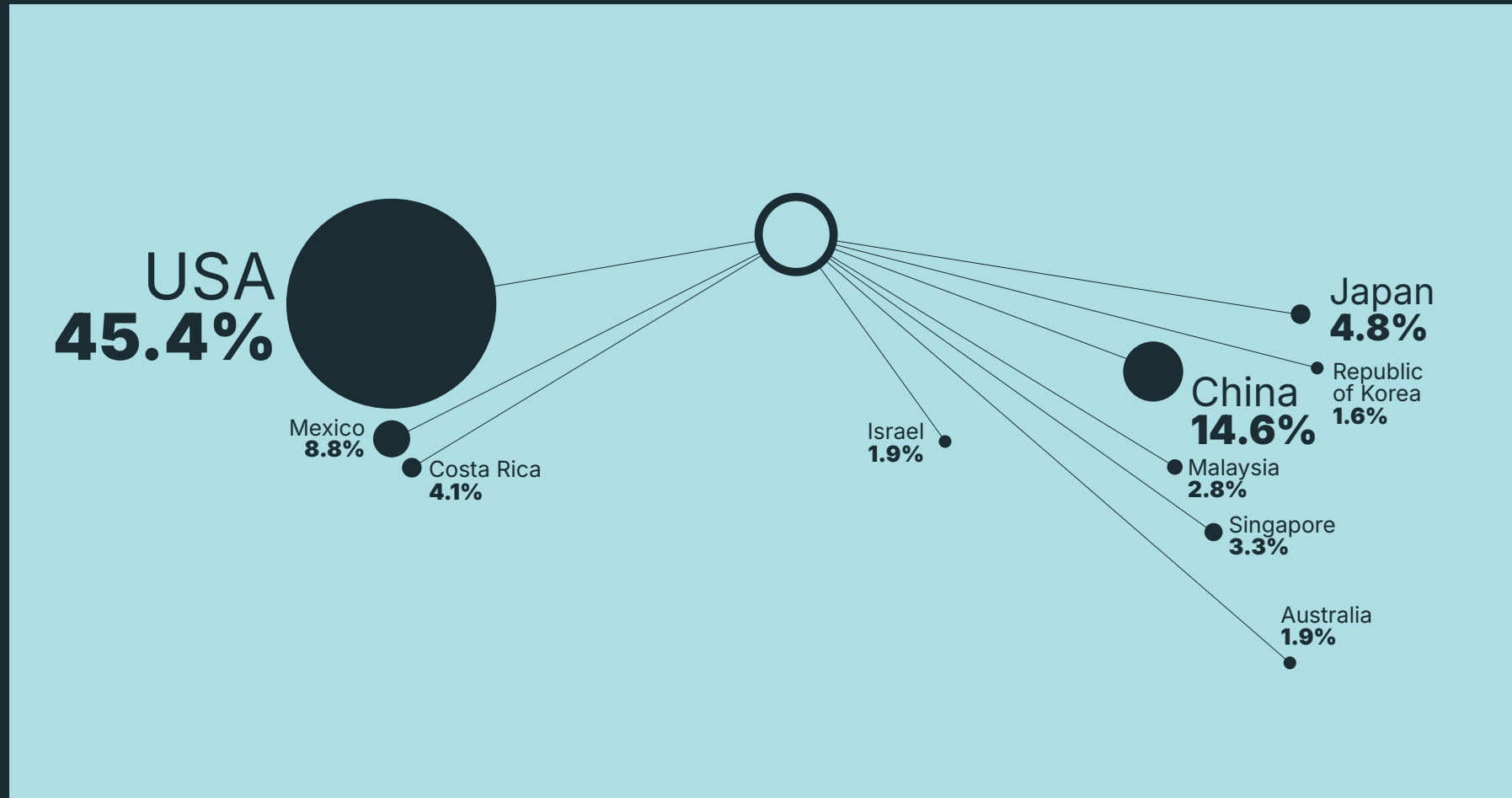




**Graph 13**

Top import suppliers to the European medical devices market

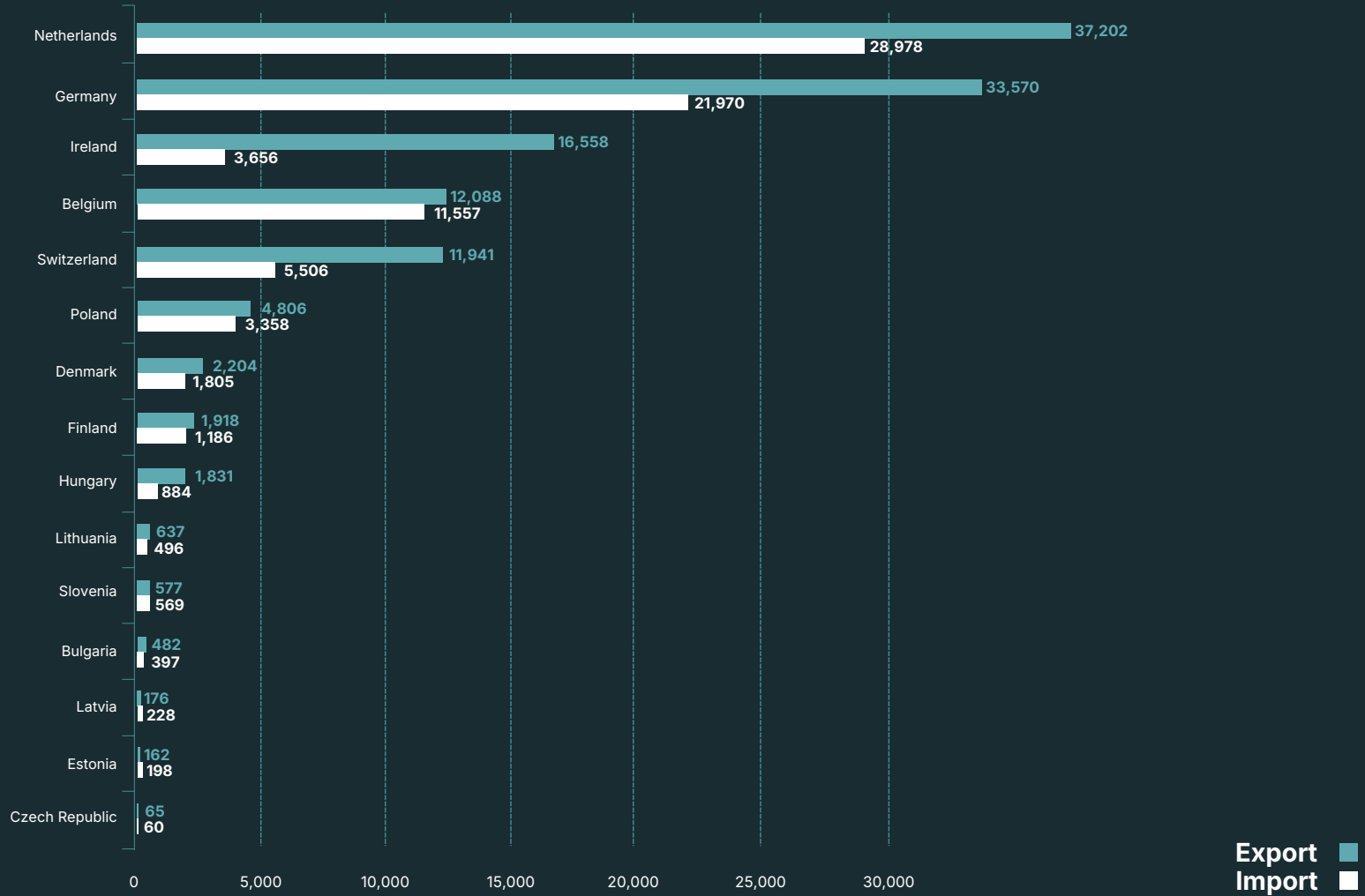
2023 (ref. 10)



### Graph 14

## Export and import of medical devices by country

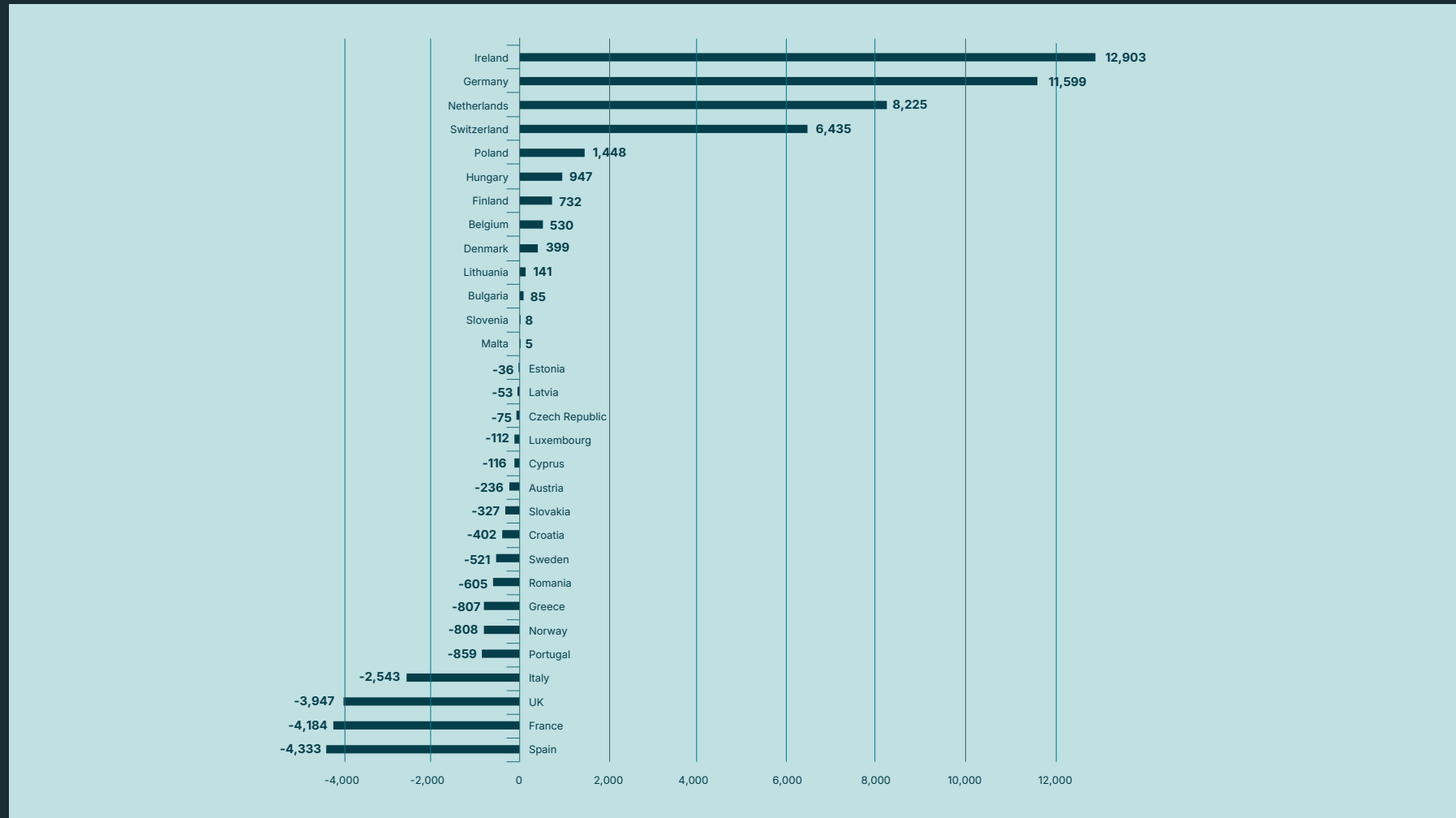
Including intra-community trade, million euros, 2023 (ref. 10)



### Graph 15

## Medical devices trade balance by country

Including intra-community trade, million euros, 2023 (ref. 10)



# About MedTech Europe

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MedTech Europe is the European trade association representing the medical technology industries, from diagnosis to cure. We represent diagnostics, digital health and medical devices manufacturers operating in Europe.

MedTech Europe's mission is to make innovative medical technology available to more people while helping healthcare systems move towards a sustainable path. MedTech Europe encourages policies that help the medical technology industry meet Europe's growing healthcare needs and expectations. It also promotes medical technology's value for Europe focusing on innovation and stakeholder relations, using economic research and data, communications, industry events and training sessions.

MedTech Europe's Facts & Figures publication is an annually updated report with robust industry data compiled from multiple sources. It is an essential source of data for international stakeholders seeking an up-to-date view of industry innovation and employment, SME activity, expenditure on medical technology, trade flows and market size in Europe.

Our association aims to represent all the relevant actors in the medical technology field including: national associations, corporate members including SMEs. The latter are the drivers of grassroots innovation and bottom-up solutions, vital maintain and improve European competitiveness in the medical technologies field.



# Scope of this report

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- In this report Europe refers to EU27, Norway, Switzerland and the United Kingdom, unless specified otherwise.
- The Innovation chapter defines medical technology following the methodology of the World Intellectual Property Organization (based on the WIPO IPC-Technology concordance as revised in August 2014). Patents are attributed by the country of residence of the applicant. EPO countries refer to the 38 member states of the European Patent Organisation.
- The Employment and Companies chapters are based on data from the annual surveys MedTech Europe carries out among its member National Associations. The most recent survey was finalized in March 2024. Figures refer to the latest year available. An enterprise is considered to be a SME if it employs fewer than 250 persons and has an annual turnover not exceeding € 50 million (small and micro-sized companies employ fewer than 50 persons and have a turnover of less than € 10 million).
- The Expenditures on medical technology chapter is based on MedTech Europe calculations using healthcare statistics from the following sources: EFPIA, Eurostat, Fitch Solutions, WHO.
- The MedTech Market in Europe chapter is based on manufacturers' sales (revenue) not including margins, such as value added in the wholesaling and retailing, transportation costs, some taxes included in the final price, etc.
- The Trade chapter data refers to the medical technology products in the following categories, excluding in vitro diagnostics: orthopaedics & prosthetics, patient aids, dental products, diagnostics imaging, consumables, other medical devices (incl. wheelchairs, ophthalmic instruments, hospital furniture, medical & surgical sterilisers, ultra-violet or infra-red ray apparatus, blood pressure monitors, endoscopy apparatus, dialysis apparatus, transfusion apparatus, anaesthetic apparatus & instruments).

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**MedTech Europe**  
from diagnosis to cure