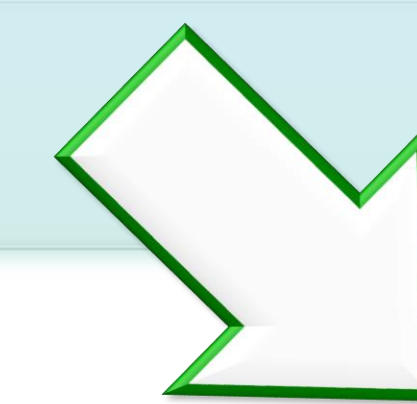


## Evidence Through Research

- 2012: The European Health Literacy Survey (HLS-EU)<sup>1</sup> was the first study to give evidence of different levels of health literacy in Europe. The study found out that 47,6% of the respondents have either problematic or inadequate health literacy.
- 2016: The German Health Literacy Survey (HLS-GER)<sup>2</sup> was the first national survey to evaluate health literacy in Germany. It showed that more than half of the population in Germany (54,3%) have either problematic or inadequate health literacy.

## Current National Actions

- The National Action Plan on Health Literacy (NAP)<sup>3</sup> is being developed by the University of Bielefeld and the Hertie School of Governance, Berlin. It aims to provide a holistic strategy to increase health literacy in Germany.
- The Alliance for Health Literacy<sup>4</sup> is a joint process by the Federal Ministry of Health along with 14 key organizations of the German health care system, including the National Associations of Statutory Health Insurance Physicians (KBV) and Dentists (KZBV). Its focus is improving health education, information and decision aids on health as well as the patient-doctor communication.

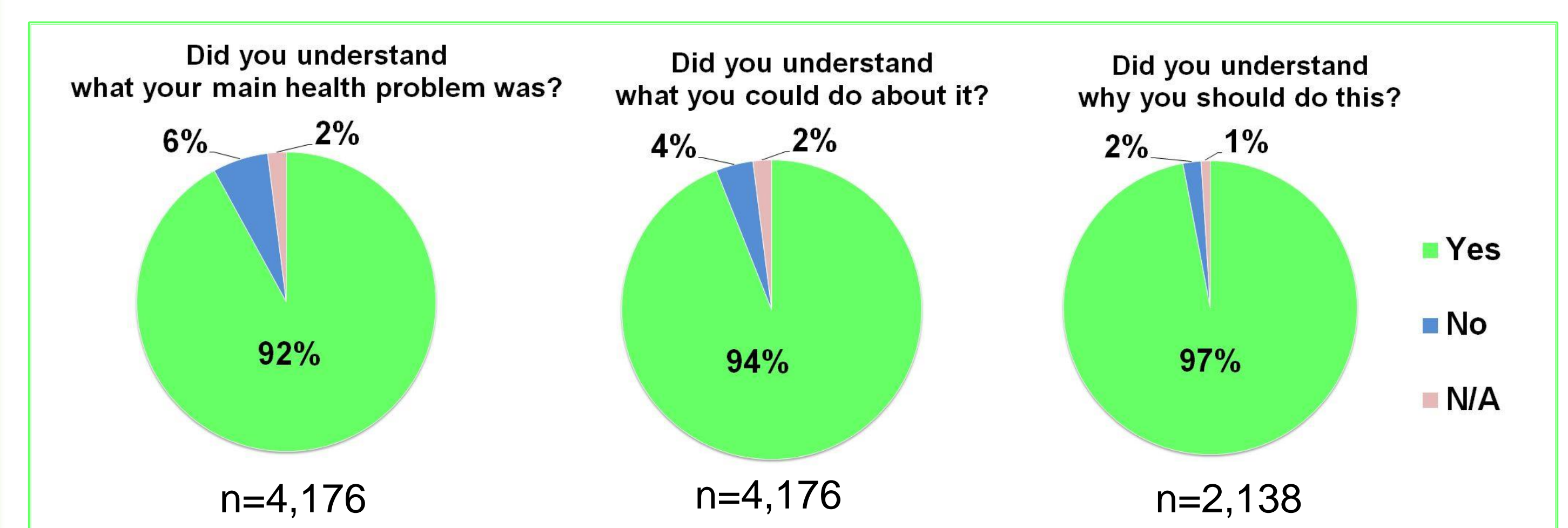


### Actions of the National Association of Statutory Health Insurance Dentists (KZBV)

- The KZBV aims to keep enhancing the “Oral Health Literacy” in Germany<sup>5</sup>.
- The main focal points of KZBV are to pay attention to patient-centred care and preventive dentistry, especially in terms of overcoming Early Childhood Caries (ECC).
- In its strategy paper “*Strategiepapier Mundgesundheitskompetenz*” (with the scientific guidance of Patientenprojekte GmbH) the following actions are considered as building blocks for the improvement of oral health literacy:
  - ✓ Health literacy as a management responsibility in dental practice
  - ✓ Oral health surveys as a central component for planning and evaluation of dental care
  - ✓ Communication as a part of quality assurance
  - ✓ Participation of patients
  - ✓ Considering also the vulnerable target groups
  - ✓ Easy and user-friendly access to information and services
  - ✓ Communicative competences in advanced and further education
  - ✓ Ensuring patient safety

### Actions of the National Association of Statutory Health Insurance Physicians (KBV)

- The KBV has been developing evidence-based patient information material on
  - ✓ the most prevalent medical conditions, their disease patterns, symptoms, diagnoses, treatment and prevention;
  - ✓ when to utilize the different services of ambulatory and inpatient emergency care in Germany;
  - ✓ how to quality check online available health information<sup>6</sup>.
- The KBV has advanced health literacy research by surveying the Ask Me 3<sup>®</sup> concept for the first time in Germany in its 2017 national health survey “*Versichertenbefragung*” (n=6,000).
  - Ask Me 3<sup>®</sup> is an educational program that encourages patients to ask their doctor three specific questions during the consultation, with the aim to better understand their health conditions and what they may do to become and stay healthy<sup>7</sup>. Some results of the survey are as follows:



All questions referred to the last general practitioner or specialist consultation in the previous 12 months.

## Conclusions

- International studies have an impact on national actions to enhance health literacy in Germany.
- A variety of research projects, policy plans and actions are being carried out in Germany to improve health literacy.
- In all of these, importance is given to the collaboration of national stakeholders in health care.

### Resources

1. HLS-EU Consortium (2012): Comparative Report of Health Literacy in Eight EU Member States. The European Health Literacy Survey HLS-EU
2. Schaeffer, D., Vogt, D., Berens, E. M., Hurrelmann, K. (2016): Gesundheitskompetenz der Bevölkerung in Deutschland – Ergebnisbericht. Bielefeld: Universität Bielefeld.
3. NAP website: <http://www.nap-gesundheitskompetenz.de/>
4. Federal Ministry of Health website: <https://www.bundesgesundheitsministerium.de/>
5. KZBV website: <http://www.kzbv.de/>
6. KBV website: <https://www.kbv.de/>
7. National Patient Safety Foundation website: <http://www.npsf.org/>

### Contact

T.Schmitt@kzbv.de

FTille@kbv.de



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