



## European Insurance — Key Facts

September 2019

Insurance Europe is the European insurance and reinsurance federation. Through its 37 member bodies — the national insurance associations — Insurance Europe represents all types of insurance and reinsurance undertakings, eg pan-European companies, monoliners, mutuals and SMEs. Insurance Europe, which is based in Brussels, represents undertakings that account for around 95% of total European premium income. Insurance makes a major contribution to Europe's economic growth and development. European insurers generate premium income of more than €1 300bn, directly employ over 900 000 people and invest over €10 300bn in the economy.

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All figures in this booklet are the latest available, with 2018 data being provisional and not adjusted for inflation. Unless otherwise stated, all premiums are direct gross written premiums at current exchange rates, all claims and benefits paid are at current exchange rates and the growth rates of all euro-denominated values are calculated at constant exchange rates.

All figures refer to domestic markets unless otherwise stated. Domestic markets cover:

- all enterprises with their head office in that country operating on home territory (including subsidiaries of EU/EEA and non-EU/EEA enterprises); and
- branches of enterprises of third (non-EU/EEA) countries.

Any total market figures cover domestic markets plus:

- branches of enterprises from EU/EEA countries; and
- enterprises operating through EU freedom of services (FOS).

Since 2016, a number of countries have started reporting data based on the definitions in the EU's new Solvency II regulatory regime. This may mean that the 2016–2018 figures are not directly comparable with those of earlier years, primarily for health and P&C business.

## Abbreviations

EEA = European Economic Area

EIOPA = European Insurance and Occupational Pensions Authority

EU = European Union

GDP = gross domestic product

GWP = gross written premiums

P&C = property and casualty

## Insurance Europe full member associations and country codes

**Austria (AT)** — Verband der Versicherungsunternehmen Österreichs (VVO)

**Belgium (BE)** — Assuralia

**Bulgaria (BG)** — Association of Bulgarian Insurers (ABZ)

**Croatia (HR)** — Hrvatski ured za osiguranje (HUO)

**Cyprus (CY)** — Insurance Association of Cyprus

**Czech Republic (CZ)** — Česká asociace pojišťoven (ČAP)

**Denmark (DK)** — Forsikring & Pension (F&P)

**Estonia (EE)** — Eesti Kindlustusseltside Liit

**Finland (FI)** — Finanssiala ry

**France (FR)** — Fédération Française de l'Assurance (FFA)

**Germany (DE)** — Gesamtverband der Deutschen Versicherungswirtschaft (GDV)

**Greece (GR)** — Hellenic Association of Insurance Companies

**Hungary (HU)** — Magyar Biztosítók Szövetsége (MABISZ)

**Iceland (IS)** — Samtök Fjármálafyrirtækja (SFF)

**Ireland (IE)** — Insurance Ireland

**Italy (IT)** — Associazione Nazionale fra le Imprese Assicuratrici (ANIA)

**Latvia (LV)** — Latvijas Apdrošinātāju Asociācija (LAA)

**Lichtenstein (LI)** — Liechtensteinischer Versicherungsverband

**Luxembourg (LU)** — Association des Compagnies d'Assurances et de Réassurances du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg (ACA)

**Malta (MT)** — Malta Insurance Association (MIA)

**Netherlands (NL)** — Verbond van Verzekeraars

**Norway (NO)** — Finans Norge

**Poland (PL)** — Polska Izba Ubezpieczeń (PIU)

**Portugal (PT)** — Associação Portuguesa de Seguradores (APS)

**Romania (RO)** — Uniunea Națională a Societăților de Asigurare și Reasigurare din Romania (UN SAR)

**Slovakia (SK)** — Slovenská asociácia poisťovní (SLASPO)

**Slovenia (SI)** — Slovensko Zavarovalno Združenje (SZZ)

**Spain (ES)** — Unión Española de Entidades Aseguradoras y Reaseguradoras (UNESPA)

**Sweden (SE)** — Svensk Försäkring

**Switzerland (CH)** — Schweizerischer Versicherungsverband (ASA/SVV)

**Turkey (TR)** — Türkiye Sigorta, Reasürans ve Emeklilik Şirketleri Birliği

**United Kingdom (UK)** — The British Insurers' European Committee:  
Association of British Insurers (ABI)  
International Underwriting Association of London (IUA)  
Lloyd's



## 1. European insurance in the world

Europe accounts for a third of global insurance premiums, slightly less than the Asia-Pacific region and slightly more than North America.

### Distribution of insurance premiums — 2018



32.4%	Asia-Pacific
31.6%	Europe
30.8%	North America
3.1%	Latin America & Caribbean
2.1%	Middle East & Africa

Source: Swiss Re Sigma No.3/2019: "World insurance: the great pivot east continues"



Insurance makes a major contribution to economic growth and development.

It facilitates economic transactions by providing risk transfer and indemnification.

It encourages risk management and the promotion of safe practices.

It promotes financial stability by providing long-term investment in the economy.

And it encourages stable and sustainable savings and pension provision.



## 2. European premiums, claims and benefits paid



€1 311bn

Total premiums

€764bn

Life premiums

€407bn

P&C premiums

€140bn

Health premiums

€1 069bn

Total claims and  
benefits paid

€705bn

Life benefits paid

€253bn

P&C claims paid

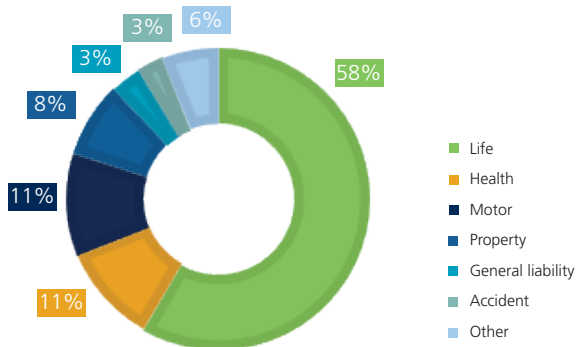
€111bn

Health claims paid

Total European direct gross written premiums amounted to €1 311bn in 2018, made up of €764bn of life premiums, €407bn of property and casualty (P&C) premiums and €140bn of health premiums. Total premiums increased 6.2% on 2017, with life premiums growing 6.7%, P&C 5.7% and health 4.8%.

In 2018, insurance penetration (gross written premiums as a percentage of GDP) increased by 0.21 of a percentage point to 7.46% and ranged from 0.5% in Liechtenstein to 14.3% in the UK.

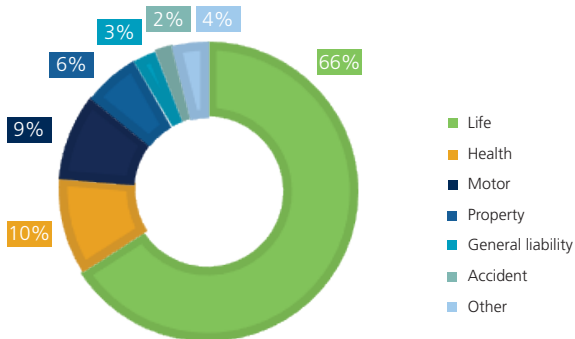
### Gross written premiums — 2018



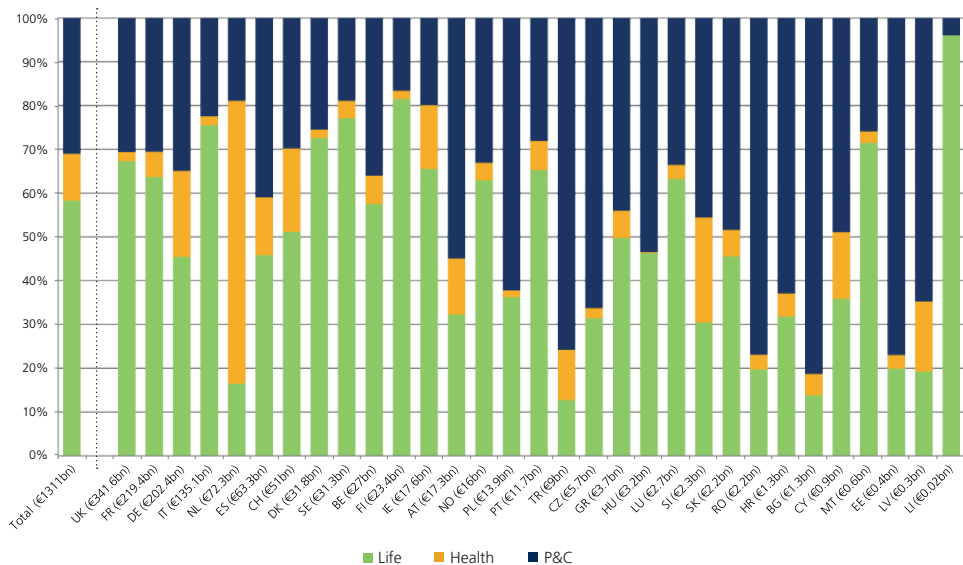
An average of €2 170 per capita was spent on insurance in Europe in 2018, compared to €2 049 in 2017. Of the per capita spend in 2018, €1 264 was on life insurance, €673 on P&C and €232 on health.

European insurers paid out €1 069bn in claims and benefits to insureds in 2018, a 3.1% increase on 2017. Life insurers paid out €705bn — a 2.6% increase — in benefits to insureds, providing them with capital and/or annuities. P&C claims paid increased 5.6% to €253bn and health claims paid increased 4.0% to €111bn.

### Claims and benefits paid — 2018



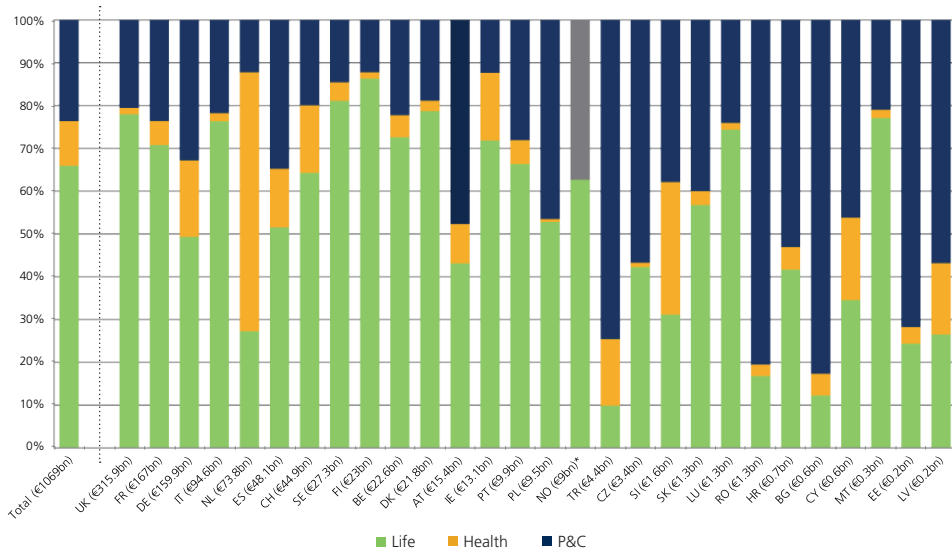
## Gross written premiums by country — 2018



# Average spent per capita on insurance in Europe — 2018

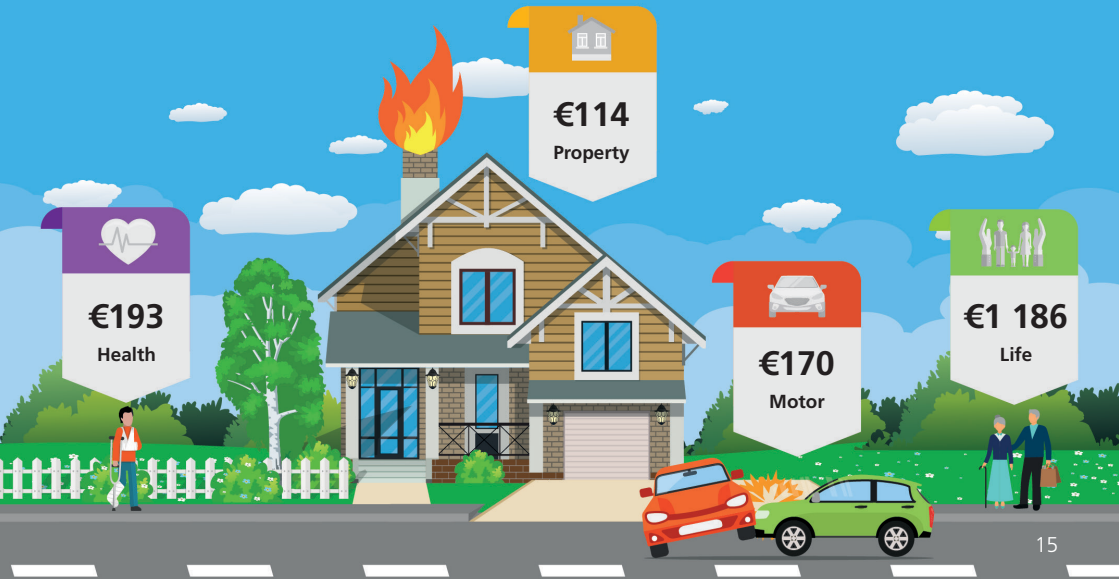


## Claims and benefits paid by country — 2018



\*For Norway: no breakdown of health and P&C claims

## Average claims and benefits paid per capita in Europe — 2018



## 2.1 Life insurance

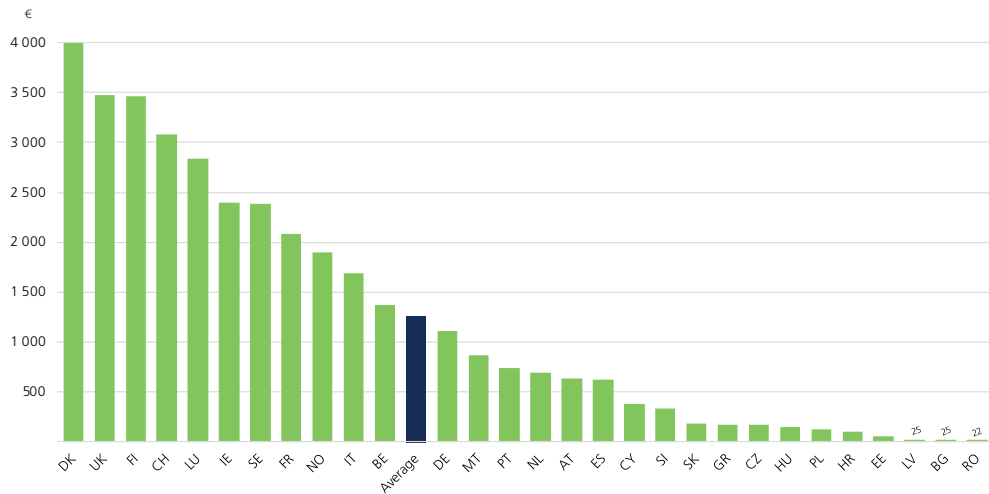
Life insurance policies can take the form of individual or group contracts. They can be products offering protection, savings products or a combination of both.

In total, European life insurance premiums increased 6.7% to €764bn in 2018, largely reflecting double-digit growth in the UK, the largest life insurance market in Europe.





## Life premiums per capita by country — 2018 (€)



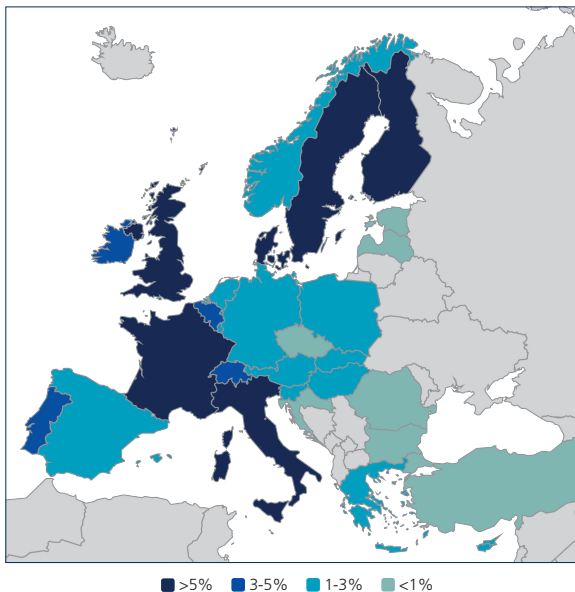
Total life benefits paid in Europe increased 2.6% to €705bn in 2018, equal to €1 186 per capita, partially due to a surge in life benefits paid in the UK.

In 2018, life insurance penetration in Europe grew to 4.35% from 4.21%. Penetration rates ranged from 0.2% in Latvia to 9.6% in the UK.

An average of €1 264 per capita was spent on life insurance in Europe in 2018, compared to €1 189 in 2017.

Life insurance density varied in 2018 from €22 per capita in Romania to more than €3 000 in Finland, the UK and Denmark.

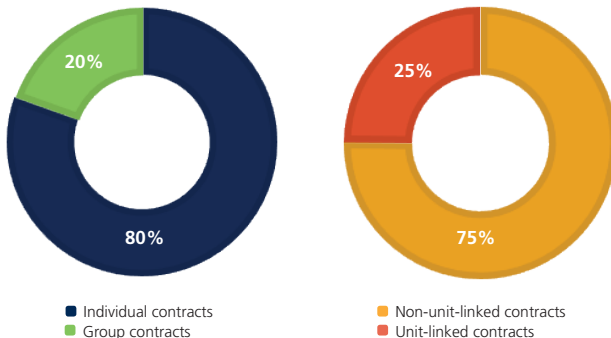
### Life penetration by country — 2018



After a strong 17.3% increase in 2016, traditional life insurance contracts<sup>1</sup> remained fairly stable (+0.3%) in 2017, the latest year for which a breakdown is available. They accounted for 75.2% of life premiums. Meanwhile unit-linked contracts<sup>2</sup> recorded a 5.2% decline in 2017. As a result, their share of total life premiums decreased one percentage point to 24.8%.

Premiums from individual contracts fell 1.5% and accounted for 80.4% of all life premiums, compared to 80.7% in 2016. Premiums collected through group contracts registered a slight increase of 0.7% in 2017, and accounted for 19.6% of all life insurance premiums, compared to 19.3% the year before.

### Life premiums by type of contract — 2017



<sup>1</sup> Any contract that offers either protection only or protection with an investment component

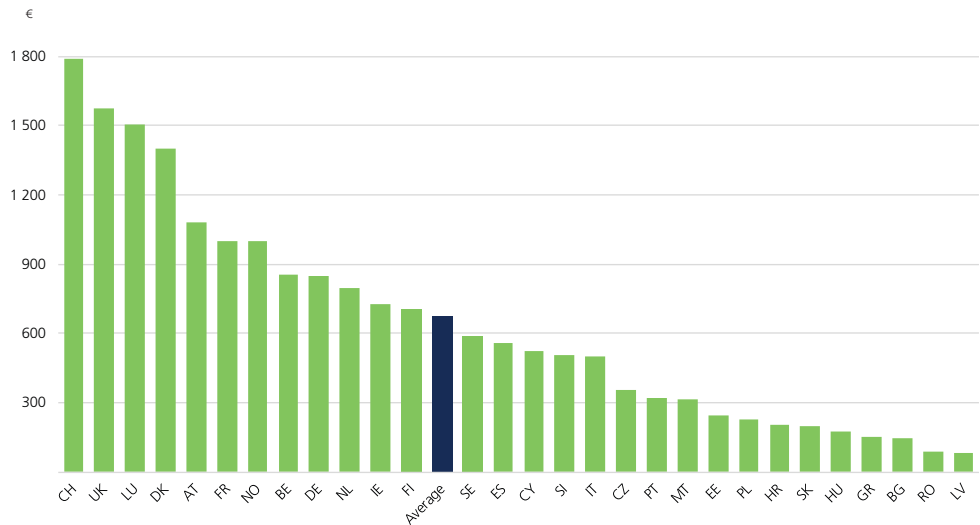
<sup>2</sup> Unit-linked products are pure investment products, without a protection component

## 2.2 Property & casualty insurance

Property & casualty (P&C) insurance, whose two main business lines are motor and property, includes a wide range of cover for individuals, property, vehicles and businesses. P&C premiums grew 5.7% in 2018 to total €407bn.



## P&C premiums per capita by country — 2018 (€)

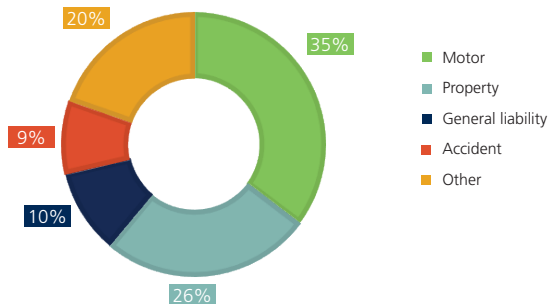


Motor insurance was the largest P&C business line in 2018, accounting for 35% of premiums. Motor premiums grew 3.8% in 2018 to €144bn. Property insurance, accounting for 26% of P&C, grew 4.8% to €105bn. General liability premiums increased 6.9% to €43bn and accident premiums increased 2.5% to €37bn.

In 2018, P&C insurance penetration increased from 2.26% to 2.32%, ranging from 0.6% in Latvia to 4.4% in the UK. An average of €673 per capita was spent on P&C insurance in Europe in 2018, compared to €639 in 2017.

P&C insurers paid out €253bn in claims in 2018, a year-on-year increase of 5.6%. Motor claims paid increased 3.3% to €100bn, while property claims jumped 9.7% to €65bn. General liability and accident claims totalled €26bn and €21bn respectively.

### P&C premiums by business line — 2018



## 2.2.1 Motor insurance

Motor third-party liability (MTPL), which is compulsory in the EU, provides financial protection against claims for physical damage and/or bodily injury resulting from traffic collisions.

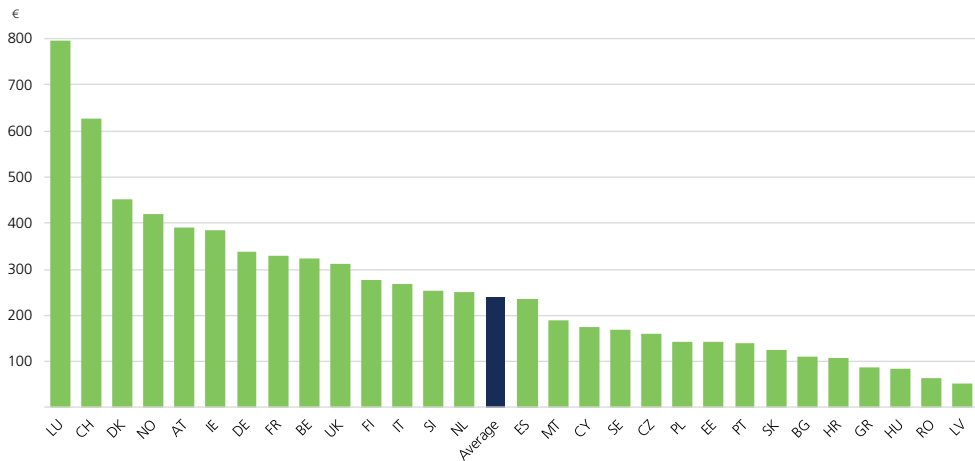
Additionally, comprehensive motor insurance offers financial protection for first-party losses and, in some cases, fire, theft and breakdown services.

In 2018, motor insurance premiums increased 3.8% to €144bn, or €238 per capita.

Claims paid by motor insurers increased 3.3% to €100bn, or €170 per capita.



## Motor premiums per capita by country — 2018 (€)





## 2.2.2 Property insurance

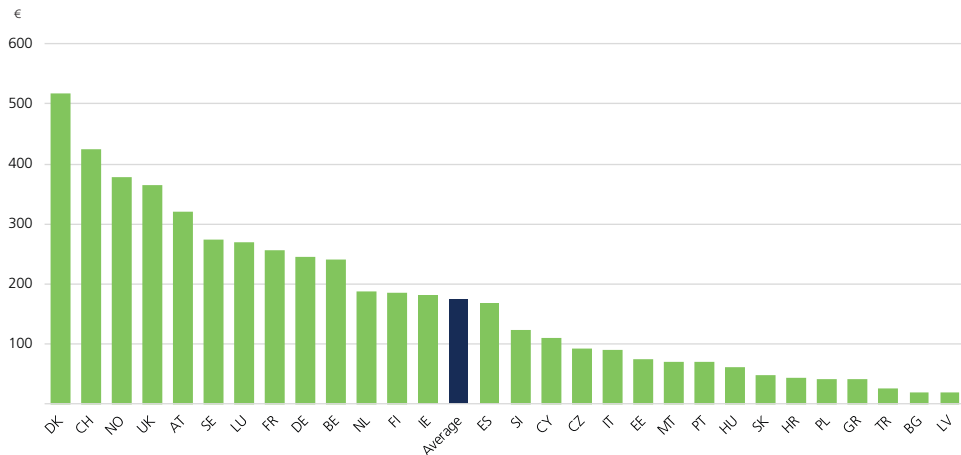
Property insurance provides protection against risks to property, such as fire, theft and some weather damage. The business line includes specialised forms of insurance, such as fire, flood, earthquake or home insurance.

In 2018, property insurance premiums increased 4.8% to reach €105bn. This equates to an average of €174 per inhabitant.

Property claims paid increased 9.7% to €65bn in 2018, or €114 per capita.



## Property premiums per capita by country — 2018 (€)

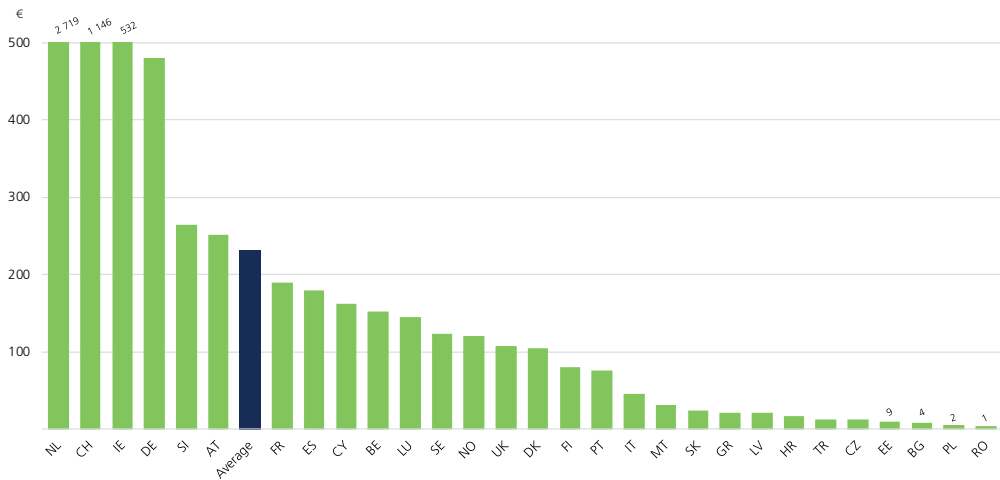


## 2.3 Health insurance

Health insurance provides individuals or groups with cover for the medical costs of illness or accidents. Health insurers also offer other products, such as critical illness, disability or long-term care insurance. Total European health premiums grew 4.8% to €140bn in 2018.



## Health premiums per capita by country — 2018 (€)

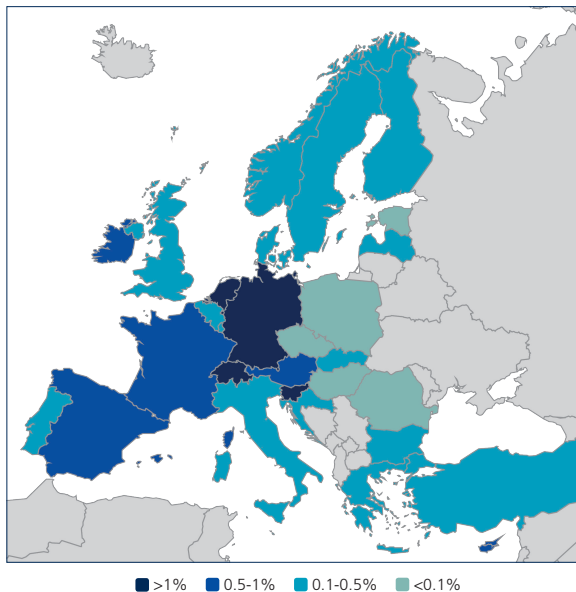


In 2018, health insurance penetration increased slightly from 0.79% to 0.8%. It varied from 0.01% in Hungary to 6% in the Netherlands.

An average of €232 per capita was spent on health insurance in Europe in 2018, compared to €222 in 2017. Health insurance density varied in 2018 from €1 per capita in Hungary to over €2 700 in the Netherlands. The vast differences observed between countries to a large extent reflect differences in national health and social security systems and the role of private insurers.

Health insurance claims paid grew 4.0% in 2018 to reach €111bn. The average claim paid per capita amounted to €193, compared to €186 in 2017.

### Health penetration by country — 2018





The insurance sector is the largest institutional investor in the EU, with more than €10.3trn of assets under management invested in the economy in 2018.

This is equivalent to 58% of the GDP of the EU.



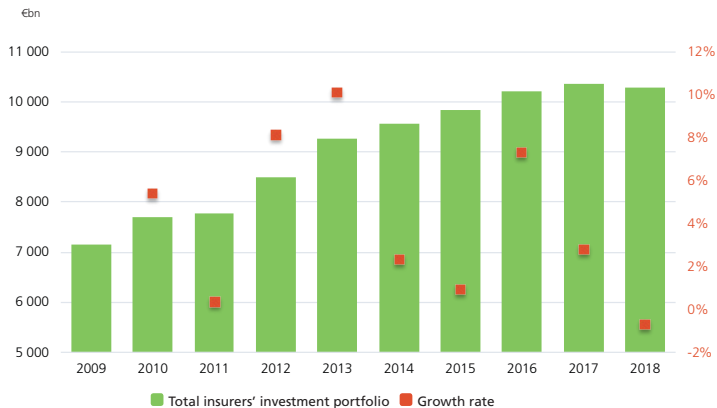
### 3. Insurers' investment portfolio

Investments are an integral part of the insurance business model, in which the premiums insurers receive are invested until claims or benefits become due. The insurance sector is the largest institutional investor in Europe and a key source of the investment needed to support growth in the economy.



According to Insurance Europe's preliminary figures, in 2018, the European insurance industry's portfolio remained broadly stable compared with 2017, with €10.3trn invested in bonds, company shares and other assets on behalf of millions of life and non-life insurance customers.

### Insurers' investment portfolio — 2009–2018 (€bn)





## European insurers' investment portfolio



**€10.3trn**

Total investment portfolio



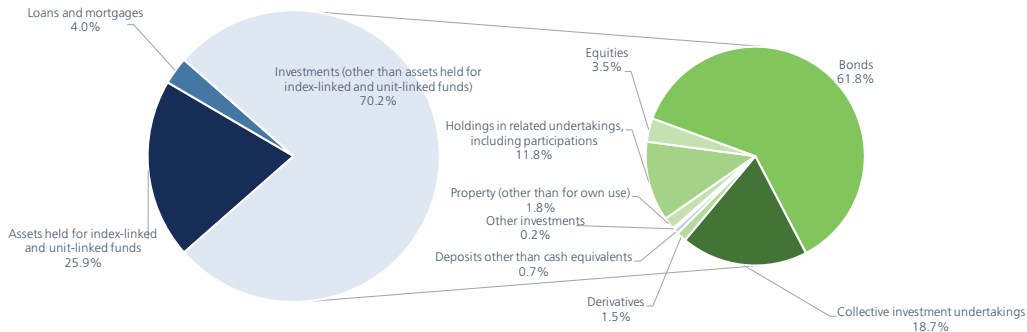
Equivalent to

**58%** of EU GDP



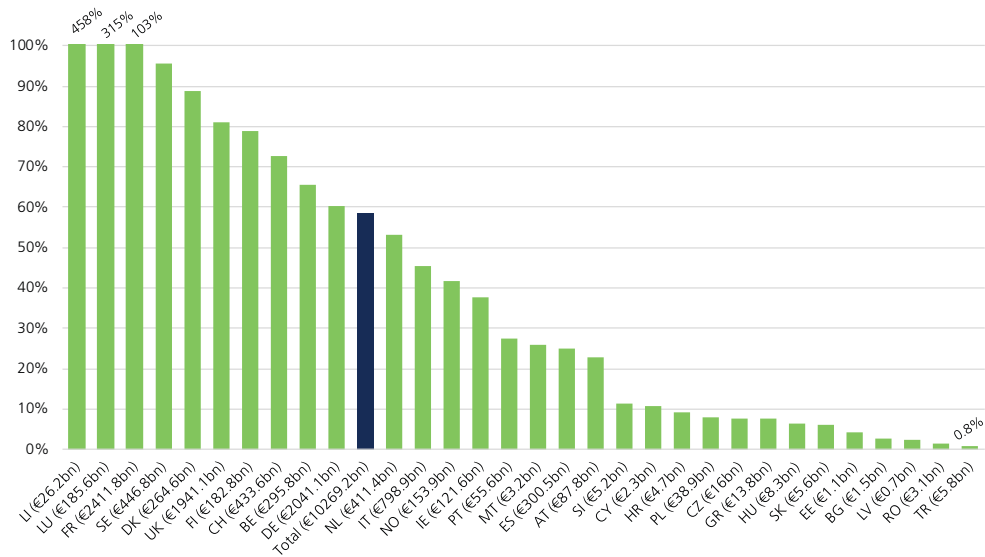
In 2018, Europe's insurers held around 26% of their total portfolio in index-linked and unit-linked funds and 4% in loans and mortgages. The remaining 70% was in other investments, of which around 62% was in bonds<sup>3</sup>.

### Breakdown of insurers' investment portfolio — fourth quarter 2018<sup>3</sup>



<sup>3</sup> Source: EIOPA Solvency II Q4 2018 Solo Quarterly Balance Sheet

## Insurers' investment portfolio as share of GDP by country — 2018





**The European insurance sector is a significant employer,  
both in terms of direct and indirect employment.**

## 4. Companies and employees

There were around 3 200 insurance companies operating in Europe in 2018, down 3.2% on the previous year. This is the number of domestic companies and branches of non-EU/EEA country companies.

European companies can offer cross-border services either through freedom of establishment (ie branches) or freedom of services. In 2017, the latest year for which a breakdown is available, around 500 branches of EU/EEA companies were operating in the EU and around 6 300 licensed insurance operations were overseen by national supervisory authorities on the basis of freedom of services.

The European insurance industry employs more than 900 000 people directly. This figure excludes outsourced employees and independent intermediaries.





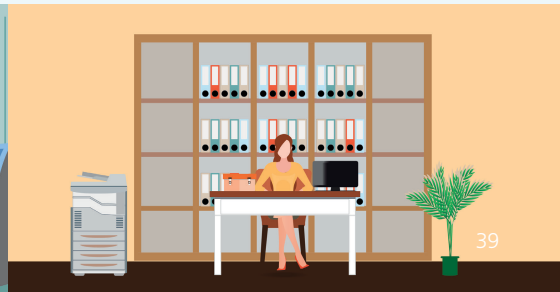
**Distribution structures vary between EU markets, are adapted to consumers' needs and are constantly evolving.**

## 5. Distribution channels

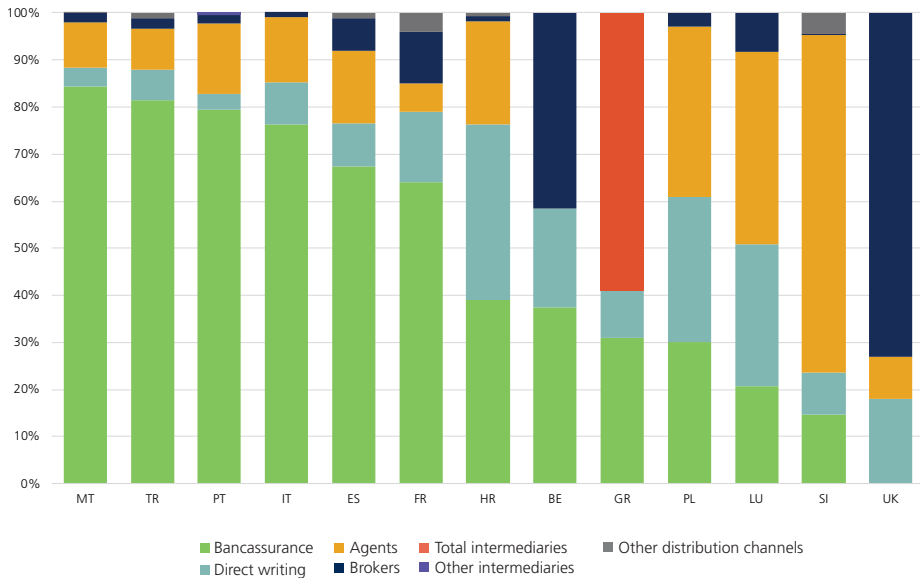
Insurers sell their products either directly or through a variety of other distribution channels, of which the most familiar are brokers, agents and bancassurance.

The diversity of distribution channels benefits consumers, whose cultures, needs and preferences vary between markets. It ensures that consumers have better access to insurance products and stimulates competition between providers and distributors on the price and quality of products.

Bancassurance is the main distribution channel for life products in many European countries today, but has a more modest share in non-life. Intermediaries (agents and, to a lesser extent, brokers) are the largest distribution channel for non-life policies and they also play an important role in life distribution in certain markets. Direct sales through employees or distance-selling are the other main channels for the distribution of non-life products. These two channels are less developed in life insurance.

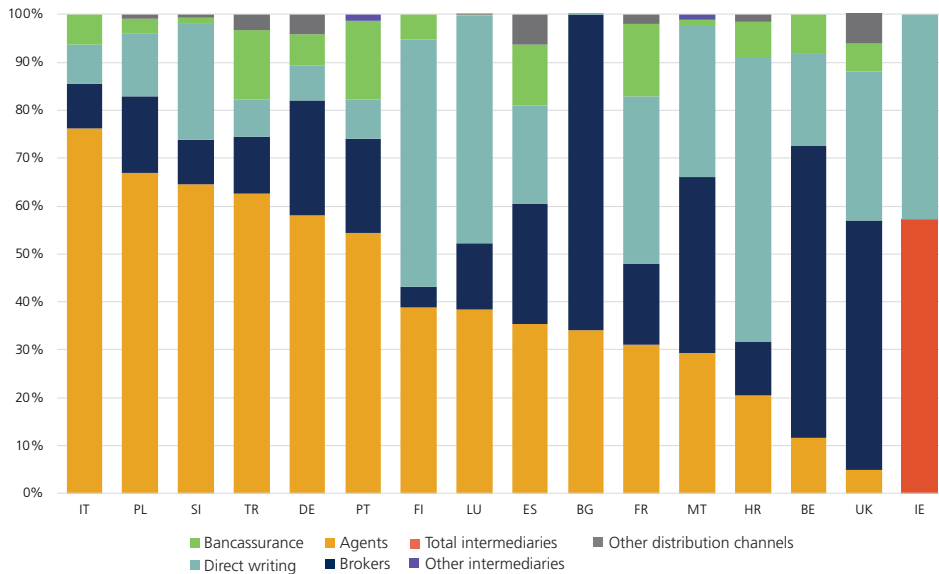


## Life distribution channels by country (% of GWP) — 2017





## Non-life distribution channels by country (% of GWP) — 2017



## Explanatory notes

### 2. European premiums, claims and benefits paid

#### Total premiums

For CH, figures for life business include private insurers' pension products but no occupational pension funds; figures for health business include supplementary insurance only and no compulsory health insurance.

For DE, figures include "Pensionskassen" and pension funds, and are for the total market.

For DK and ES, figures are for the total market.

For GR, figures since 2016 are not comparable with previous years because lines of business are classified according to the Solvency II Directive.

For DK, HU, PT, SK and UK, figures since 2016 are based on Solvency II templates.

#### Total claims and benefits paid

For CH, figures for life business include private insurers' pension products but no occupational pension funds; figures for health business include supplementary insurance only and no compulsory health insurance.

For DE, life benefits paid include "Pensionskassen" and pension funds. P&C claims paid are gross claims expenditure (ie claims paid plus provision for claims). Figures are for the total market.

For DK, figures are for the total market.

For DK, HU, PT, SK and UK, figures since 2016 are based on Solvency II templates.

For NO, P&C claims paid are gross claims expenditure (ie claims paid plus provision for claims).

For HU, IE and NO, 2017 figures are used for 2018.

#### Life benefits paid

For CH, figures for life business include private insurers' pension products but no occupational pension funds.

For DE, figures include “Pensionskassen” and pension funds, and are for the total market.

For DK, figures are for the total market.

For HU, PT, SK and UK, figures since 2016 are based on Solvency II templates.

For IE and LU, 2017 figures are used for 2018.

#### **P&C claims paid**

For DE, gross claims expenditure is reported (ie claims paid plus provision for claims) and figures are for the total market.

For DK, figures are for the total market.

For HU, PT, SK and UK, figures since 2016 are based on Solvency II templates.

For NO, gross claims expenditure is reported (ie claims paid plus provision for claims).

For HU and IE, 2017 figures are used for 2018.

#### **Health claims paid**

For CH, figures for health business include supplementary insurance only, and no compulsory health insurance.

For DE and DK, figures are for the total market.

For HU, PT, SK and UK, figures since 2016 are based on Solvency II templates.

For IE, 2017 figures are used for 2018.

### **3. Insurers’ investment portfolio**

#### **Total investment portfolio**

For BE, investment portfolio data is for the domestic market, including foreign activity of domestic companies.

For DE, figures are for the total market and are preliminary.

For DK, figures are for the total market.

For GR, IE, LU and SI, 2017 figures are used for 2018.

For RO, 2016-2018 figures are from the EIOPA SII templates.

For HU, PT, SK and UK, figures since 2016 are based on Solvency II templates.

#### **4. Companies and employees**

##### **Number of companies**

For BE, DK and IE, 2017 figures are used for 2018.

For DE, figures are for companies under federal supervision (including reinsurers, "Pensionskassen", funeral expenses funds and non-EEA branches) and exclude companies under Land supervision and pension funds.

For NL, figures refer to licenced companies (active and not active) under Dutch supervision and exclude funeral-in-kind insurers.

##### **Number of direct employees**

For DK, IE, SE and TR, 2017 figures are used for 2018.

For DE, figures refer to employees subject to social security contributions in primary insurance and reinsurance companies and insurance intermediation firms as at 30 June of the respective year.

For SK, figures are for the 14 insurance companies that are members of SLASPO, not the full domestic market (16 companies).

#### **5. Distribution channels**

##### **Life distribution channels**

For DE and UK, data is for new business only.

For BE, bancassurance includes agents.

## Reporting countries

Chapter	Indicator	Missing countries	Sample size
2. European premiums, claims and benefits paid	Total premiums	IS	99.97%
	Total claims and benefits paid	IS, LI	99.97%
	Life premiums	IS	99.97%
	Life benefits paid	HU, IS, LI	99.72%
	P&C premiums	IS	99.97%
	P&C claims paid	GR, IS, LI, NO	98.46%
	Health premiums	IS, LI	99.97%
	Health claims paid	GR, HU, IS, LI, NO	98.22%
2.1 Life insurance	Life premiums	IS	99.97%
	Life benefits paid	HU, IS, LI	99.72%
	Life premiums, individual contracts	AT, BG, CY, CZ, DK, EE, GR, IE, IS, LI, LU, NL, RO, SE, SI, SK, TR, UK	58.61%
	Life premiums, group contracts	AT, BG, CY, CZ, DK, EE, GR, IE, IS, LI, LU, NL, RO, SE, SI, SK, TR, UK	58.61%
	Life premiums, non-unit-linked contracts	AT, CY, DK, IE, IS, LI, LU, SE, SK, UK	66.00%
	Life premiums, unit-linked contracts	AT, CY, DK, IE, IS, LI, LU, SE, SK, TR, UK	65.31%
2.2 P&C insurance	P&C premiums	IS	99.97%
	P&C claims paid	GR, IS, LI, NO	98.46%

	Motor premiums	IS, LI	99.97%
	Motor claims paid	GR, IS, LI, NO	98.46%
	Property premiums	IS, LI	99.97%
	Property claims paid	GR, IS, LI, NO, RO	98.29%
	Accident premiums	IE, IS, LI, SK	98.45%
	Accident claims paid	CY, GR, IE, IS, LI, NO, RO, SK	96.71%
	General liability premiums	IS, LI	99.97%
	General liability claims paid	GR, IS, LI, NO, RO	98.29%
2.2.1 Motor insurance	Motor premiums	IS, LI	99.97%
	Motor claims paid	GR, IS, LI, NO	98.46%
2.2.2 Property insurance	Property premiums	IS, LI	99.97%
	Property claims paid	GR, IS, LI, NO, RO	98.29%
2.3 Health insurance	Health premiums	IS, LI	99.97%
	Health claims paid	GR, HU, IS, LI, NO	98.22%
3. Insurers' investment portfolio	Insurers' investment portfolio (10-year sample)	IS	99.97%
	Portfolio as share of GDP	IS	99.97%
	Life insurers' investment portfolio	ES, GR, HU, IE, IS, LU, RO, SE, SI	90.34%
	Non-life insurers' investment portfolio	DE, ES, GR, HU, IE, IS, LU, NO, RO, SE, SI	73.68%

	Insurers' investment portfolio (2-year sample)	IS	99.97%
4. Companies and employees	Number of insurance companies	IS, NO	98.75%
	Number of employees	BG, IS, LV, MT, NO, PL	97.53%

“European Insurance – Key Facts” is available to download from the Insurance Europe website.

Also available at [www.insuranceeurope.eu](http://www.insuranceeurope.eu) are the annual detailed statistical publication “European Insurance in Figures” and its dataset.

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