



## 5. PROPORTION OF PEOPLE WITH THE RIZIV-INAMI CHRONIC ILLNESS STATUS ACCORDING TO THEIR OFFICIAL HEALTH EXPENDITURE (CHR-1)

### 5.1. Documentation sheet

<b>Description</b>	Percentage of people with the chronic illness status (according to their official health expenditure)
<b>Calculation</b>	<p><b>Numerator</b> = Number of beneficiaries with a status of person with a chronic illness</p> <p><b>Denominator</b> = total number of Belgian residents entitled to the compulsory health insurance (i.e. 99% of the Belgian population, see A-1 in the performance report 2019)</p> <p>The result is provided as a percentage (% of the population)</p>
<b>Rationale</b>	<p>Good health is a key aspect of people's well-being and enhances opportunities to participate in the labour market and to benefit from economic and employment growth. People with poor physical or mental health are less likely to work and more likely to be unemployed than people in better health.<sup>1</sup> This might result in higher risk for financial problems, a lower level of general well-being, and social inequality. People suffering from a chronic disease often face high out-of-pocket healthcare expenses. To overcome this problem, the National Institute for Health and Disability Insurance (NIHDI-RIZIV-INAMI) created a specific status mainly based on their official health expenditure (see the technical definition below) giving access to the maximum billing (MAF) system for the chronically ill people, with a reimbursement of patients official co-payments (ticket modérateurs - remgelden) above specified thresholds and to the third-party payment for costs to the doctor and dentist (on a voluntary basis).<sup>2</sup> In fact, the chronic illness status was developed in a vision of "social protection" for patients who have high out-of-pocket expenses and regularly have access to care, and not in a vision to identify all chronic patients administratively. Chronic patients with little out-of-pocket costs have less need of this financial protection.</p>
<b>Primary data source</b>	<p>the InterMutualistic Agency/InterMutualistisch Agentschap/Agence InterMutualiste - (IMA-AIM), update 2020<sup>a</sup></p> <p>The Atlas gives access to the IMA database population which, includes all socio-economic and demographic indicators of the population within the compulsory health insurance (i.e. 99% of the total Belgian population). The IMA has a time series for this database since 2002. Due to the need for a systematic use of this database, a systematic deepening, refinement and improvement of the data contained in it was performed over the years. Yearly in the month of September, statistics of the previous calendar year are added.</p>
<b>Technical definitions</b>	<p>Individuals entitled to the "chronic illness" status. Entitlement is observed through data from the IMA-AIM variables pp3015, pp3016 or pp3017. If the value for one of these 3 variables is equal to 1(opening status) or 2(extension of status period), the individual has an entitlement and is assumed to suffer from a chronic disease.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chronic illness Status - Financial criterion (pp3015) is automatically opened by the sickness fund with which the beneficiary concerned is registered or affiliated, for a particular calendar year if during the two previous calendar years, the official health expenditures (i.e. the official expenditure reimbursed by RIZIV-INAMI and the patient's official co-payments (ticket modérateurs-remgelden) but excluding extra-billing (<i>supplements-supplementen</i>) and direct payments for non-reimbursed services) of the</li> </ul>

<sup>a</sup> Available from <https://atlas.ima-aim.be/databanken/?rw=1&lang=nl>



---

	<p>beneficiary exceed €300 per quarter during 8 consecutive quarters (RD of 15 December 2013 implementing Article 37 vicies/1).<sup>2</sup><sub>3</sub></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Chronic illness Status-lump sum for chronically ill person (pp3016) is automatically opened by the health insurance fund with which the beneficiary concerned is registered or affiliated, if the beneficiary is entitled to the fixed payment for chronically ill people. Such benefit is granted if the person is in a situation of dependency and if his/her official co-payments (ticket modérateurs-remgelden) exceed €450 per year (€365 for people entitled to a preferential reimbursement) during two consecutive years (RD of 15 December 2013 implementing Article 37s/1).<sup>2</sup></li><li>• Chronic illness Status - Orphan Disease (pp3017) is opened on the basis of a medical certificate, drawn up by a medical specialist, confirming that the beneficiary has been affected by a rare disease or orphan disease (Chapter IV of the Royal Decree of 15 December 2013 to implementation of Article 37s/1) if the official health expenditures (i.e. the official expenditure reimbursed by RIZIV-INAMI and the patient's official co-payments (ticket modérateurs-remgelden) of the beneficiary exceed €300 per quarter during 8 consecutive quarters .<sup>2</sup></li></ul>
<b>Limitations</b>	Although the vast majority of Belgian residents are affiliated with compulsory health insurance, a small number of Belgians are not covered by this insurance. It is also important to note that this status is based on financial criteria and is not intended to cover all people with a chronic disease.
<b>International comparability</b>	a. Availability: / b. Comparability: /
<b>Performance dimension</b>	Contextual indicator
<b>Related indicators</b>	CHR-2, CHR-3

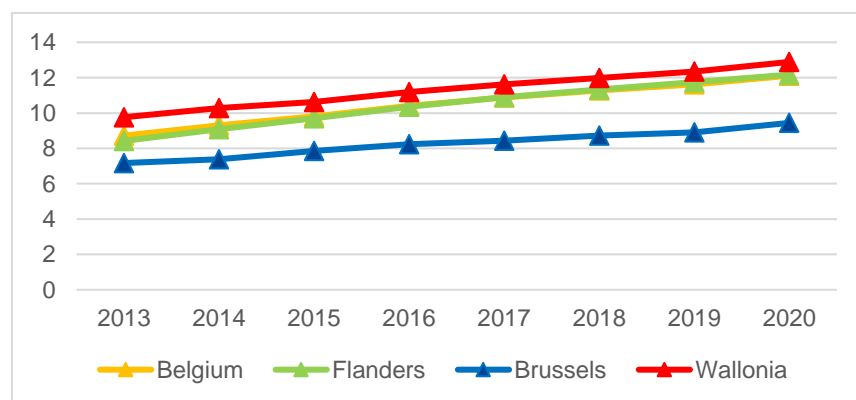
---



## 5.2. Results

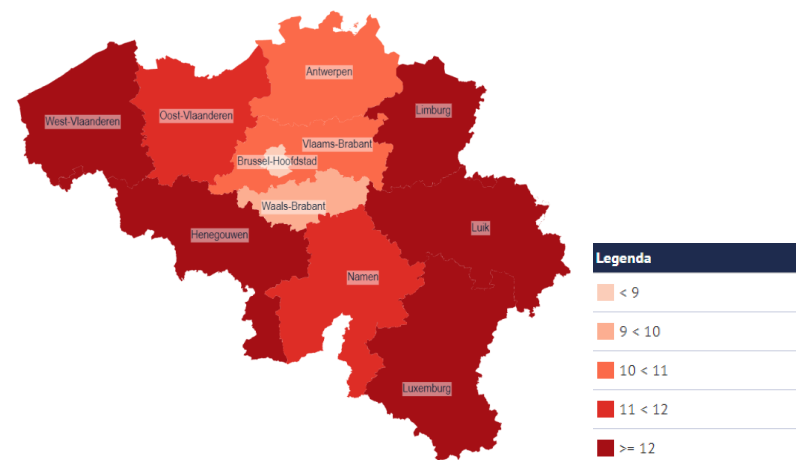
The proportion of Belgians entitled to the chronic illness status increased from 8.7% (2013) to 12.1% (2020) (Figure 11). The growth was quite similar in the Belgian regions. In 2020, Wallonia has the highest proportion of patients entitled to the chronic illness status (12.9%), followed by Flanders (12.2%) and Brussels (9.4%). Significant differences in the proportions can be seen between the provinces (Figure 12). Regarding age distribution for the chronic illness status over the regions (Figure 13), the oldest age group (75+) is underrepresented in Brussels (- 5% compared to Flanders and Wallonia), while in Flanders the group of respondents between 45 and 64 years old with chronic illness status is lower compared to the other regions. The gender-based distribution over the population with the chronic illness status shows an overrepresentation of women in all the three regions (Figure 14). Stratification of chronic illness status for the Belgian population reveals that people having a chronic illness status and entitled to an increased reimbursement (Verhoogde tegemoetkoming/bénéficiaire de l'intervention majorée) are substantially older and more of them have female gender.(Table 7)

**Figure 11 – Percentage of the population entitled to the status chronic illness (years 2013 to 2020). Figures for Belgium and the regions.**



Source: IMA/AIM ATLAS

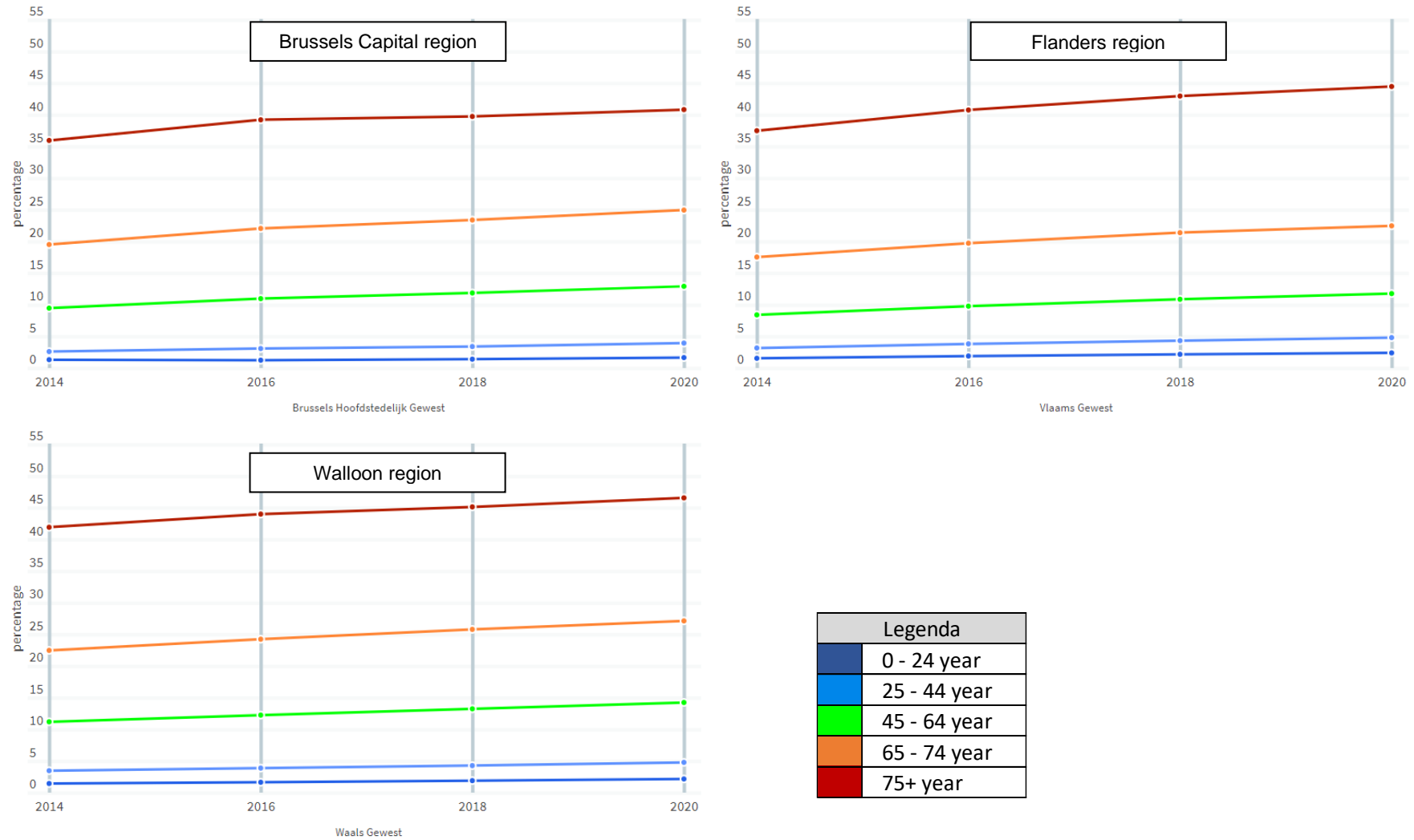
**Figure 12 – Percentage of the population entitled to the status chronic illness (Year 2019). Differences between the Belgian provinces**



Source: IMA/AIM ATLAS



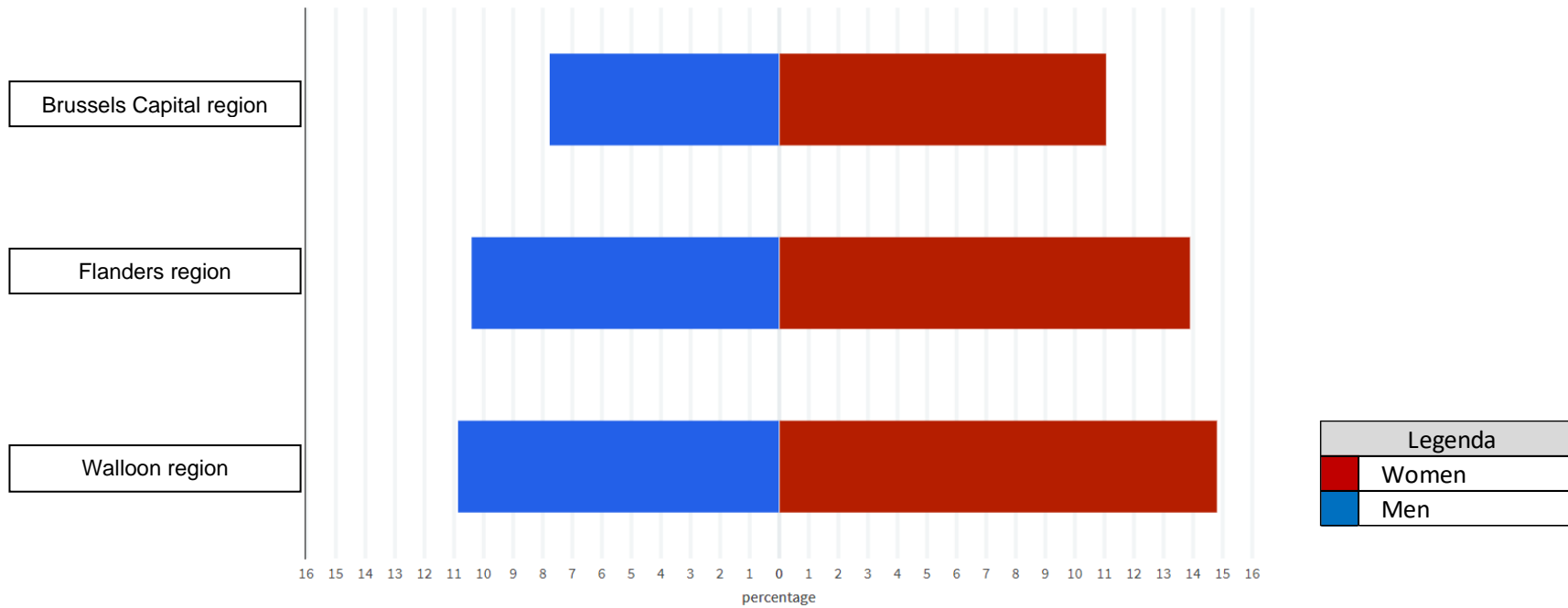
Figure 13 – Percentage of the population of the regions (in age groups) entitled to the status chronic illness (years 2014 to 2020)



Source: IMA/AIM ATLAS



Figure 14 – Percentage of the population of the regions (gender based) entitled to the status chronic illness (years 2014 to 2020)



Source: IMA/AIM ATLAS



**Table 7 – Stratification of chronic illness status for the Belgian population based on age, gender and increased reimbursement (VT-BIM) in 2020**

Chronic illness status Belgium 2020				
	No VT/BIM		VT/BIM	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
<b>0-24 y</b>	1.87	1.64	4.39	3.76
<b>25-44 y</b>	2.21	4.47	13.02	13.38
<b>45-64 y</b>	8.10	11.21	26.90	30.86
<b>65-74 y</b>	21.35	20.63	36.27	37.19
<b>75+ y</b>	37.22	40.54	51.05	58.65

Source: IMA/AIM ATLAS

Thanks to the linkage between data on the self-reported chronic disease state of people interviewed in Health Interview Survey (HIS) of 2018 and data on the chronic illness status of people in the Mandatory Health Insurance database 2018 (HISLink project), the proportion of people with the chronic illness status among the people reporting a chronic disease can be calculated. Among 2209 persons self-reporting a chronic illness in 2018, 696 have the chronic illness status, so a proportion of 31.5%. This results is close to the proportion of people with the chronic illness status among the people diagnosed for a chronic disease by their GP in the evaluation study conducted by the IMA in 2015 in the frame of the INTEGO project. <sup>4</sup>

### Key points

- The proportion of Belgians entitled to the chronic illness status increased from 8.7% (2013) to 12.1% (2020). The growth was quite similar in the three Belgian regions.
- Wallonia has the highest proportion of people with the chronic illness status and the Brussels region the lowest
- Significant differences in the proportions can be seen between the provinces.
- The Brussels region has less old-old (75+) people with chronic illness status compared to the other regions, while the figures for Flanders are lower for the middle aged citizens (45-64y).
- Women with the chronic illness status are overrepresented in all three regions compared to the percentage of men .
- People with chronic illness status and increased benefit (VT/BIM) are substantially older and more of them are women.
- 31.5% of the persons self-reporting a chronic illness in 2018 also had the chronic illness status.



## References

1. OECD. Inequalities in health [Web page]. Paris: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development; 2020 [cited 2021/07/03]. Available from: <https://www.oecd.org/health/inequalities-in-health.htm>
2. RIZIV-INAMI. Statuut persoon chronische aandoening toegang zorgen [Web page]. Brussel: Rijksinstituut voor ziekte- en invaliditeitsverzekering; 2021 [cited December 2021]. Available from: <https://www.riziv.fgov.be/nl/themas/kost-terugbetaling/ziekten/chronische-ziekten/Paginas/statuut-persoon-chronische-aandoening-toegang-zorgen.aspx>
3. de Voorzorg. Statuut Chronisch Zieken [Web page]. 2021 [cited 2021/12/07]. Available from: <https://www.devoorzorg-bondmoyson.be/statuut-chronisch-zieken>
4. IMA-AIM. Maladies chroniques chez les personnes avec le statut affection chronique : leçons d'un couplage entre les données d'Intego et l'Agence Intermutualiste. Bruxelles: InterMutualistisch Agentschap - Agence InterMutualiste; 2019.