

1.1. Practising dentists (per 1000 population) (A-12)

1.1.1. Documentation sheet

Description	Number of practising dentists per 1000 population
Calculation	<p>Primary indicator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Number of practising dentists per 1 000 population <p>Numerator : Number of practising dentists x 1 000 (end-of-year situation, 31/12) Denominator: End-of-year Belgian population (1st January t+1)</p> <p>Secondary indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Number of practising dentists, in FTE per 1000 population <p>Numerator: Number of full time equivalent (FTE) practising dentists x 1 000 (see also the technical definitions) (end-of-year situation, 31/12) Denominator: End-of-year Belgian population (1st January t+1)Number of practising dentists acceding to the agreement, in FTE per 1000 population<p>Numerator: Number of full time equivalent (FTE) practising dentists acceding to the agreement (conventionnés / geconventioneerde) x 1 000 (end-of-year situation, 31/12) Denominator: End-of-year Belgian population (1st January t+1)</p></p>
Rationale	The number of care providers gives important information on the medical workforce and thus the accessibility of healthcare. This information can be used for healthcare providers supply planning.
Data source	RIZIV–INAMI yearly statistics International comparison: OECD Health Statistics 2023 ¹
Technical definition	<p>To be aligned with international definitions, stomatologists are included in the dentists (OECD/WHO code 3).</p> <p>Practising dentists: Dentists are considered to be practising (RIZIV – INAMI: “profiles”) if they provide more than 1 clinical act (i.e. consultations, visits, technical acts, but no prescriptions) during a given year. Dentists still in training (undergraduates and postgraduates) are not included. Practising dentists include general dentists, periodontists, orthodontists and maxillofacial surgeons/stomatologists.</p> <p>RIZIV – INAMI also calculates the number of full-time-equivalent (FTE) practising dentists. Because information on their time of work is not available, FTE is calculated as the ratio between individual revenue (determined based on reimbursed RIZIV-INAMI expenditure) of a dentist compared to the P50 (median) revenue/RIZIV-INAMI expenditure of the dentists between 45-55 years old (N.B. all results above 1 is limited to 1).</p>



	<p>Regional analysis is based on the address of contact transmitted by the dentist to RIZIV-INAMI. For some of them, it is the address of the dental office while for others it is the personal address.</p> <p>Language / community is based on the language of contact with RIZIV-INAMI (i.e. either Dutch or French-speaking physicians). Some data are also available on the number of German-speaking physicians based on the postal code of the contact address. It should be noted that these German-speaking physicians are included in the Dutch / French-speaking physicians (determined based on the language of contact).</p>
Limitations	<p>For 2016, RIZIV-INAMI data slightly differ from OECD data because small corrections were done by RIZIV-INAMI after transmission of data to OECD (see also 'international comparability')</p> <p>FTE are based on RIZIV-INAMI expenditure and not on the actual time of work and should therefore be interpreted with caution, especially for 2020 because the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the median income/reimbursed expenditure and therefore the resulting FTE estimates.</p>
International comparability	<p>OECD countries use different methodologies to calculate the same indicator (such as different minimal activity thresholds). Comparisons between countries are therefore potentially inadequate.²</p> <p>It should also be noted that for 2016, Belgian OECD data incorrectly concerned the number of practising dentists with at least one clinical act (≥ 1) instead of more than one (≥ 2) as described in the definition.</p>
Dimension	Accessibility, Health workforce
Related indicators	Practising physicians (A-10), Practising nurses (A-11)

1.1.2. Results

Belgium

In 2021, there were 10 862 dentists licensed to practise and 8 926 of them were practising (6 478.8 in FTE). Only 48.4% of FTE practising dentists acceded to the agreement in 2021 and this proportion decreased by 15.8 percentage points compared to 2012 (64.2% in 2012^a).

The number of practising dentists per 1000 population increased by 9% between 2011 (0.70) and 2021 (0.77) (see Table 1).

Analyses per demographic characteristic

The proportion of Dutch-speaking FTE dentists is slightly higher than French-speaking dentists (55.4% compared to 44.6%, 2021 data) and less than 1% had German as contact language with the RIZIV-INAMI (see Table 3). The proportion of FTE practising dentists aged 55 years old and over is lower for periodontists (18.6%) than for general dentists (41%), orthodontists (36%) or maxillofacial surgeons (35.1%) (see Table 2).

^a For 2011, there are no data available on the number of dentists who acceded to the agreement.

Analyses per specialty, region, and province

The density of practising dentists per 1000 population was higher in Brussels than in Flanders and Wallonia between 2011-2021 (both in head counts and in FTE, see Figure 1). The provinces with the lowest densities of practising dentists were Hainaut, Luxembourg, and Namur (difference > -20% compared to the Belgian density, see Table 4).

In 2021, the proportion periodontists and orthodontists that acceded to the agreement was much lower than the proportion of general dentists who did so (11.7% vs. 2.9% vs. 52.2%). This proportion varied considerably between the various provinces: from 0 to 44.6% for periodontists, from 0 to 6.7% among orthodontists and from 28.2% to 82.1% among general dentists (see Table 5).

Table 1 – Number of dentists (general dentists, periodontists, orthodontists, and maxillofacial surgeons, Belgium, 2011-2021)

		2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Licensed to practise	Number	8879	9031	9182	9328	9590	9859	9980	10 157	10 321	10 633	10 862
	Per 1000 population	0.80	0.81	0.82	0.83	0.85	0.87	0.88	0.89	0.90	0.92	0.94
Practising	Number	7777	7869	7965	8108	8291	8435	8516	8614	8697	8871	8926
	Per 1000 population	0.70	0.71	0.71	0.72	0.74	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.76	0.77	0.77
Practising, in FTE	Number	5787.7	5849.7	5888.7	5987.6	6151.6	6278.3	6342.3	6377.9	6422.3	6471.4	6478.8
	Per 1000 population	0.52	0.53	0.53	0.53	0.55	0.55	0.56	0.56	0.56	0.56	0.56
Practising dentists acceding to the agreement, in FTE	Number		3755.9	3251.4	3295.2	3425.3	3515.7	3322.8	3304.0	3279.5	3259.6	3135.3
	Convention rate		64.2%	55.2%	55.0%	55.7%	56.0%	52.4%	51.8%	51.1%	50.4%	48.4%
	Per 1000 population		0.34	0.29	0.29	0.30	0.31	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.28	0.27

Source: RIZIV – INAMI data, KCE calculation

Table 2 – Age of practising dentists, in FTE, per specialty, 2021

	FTE	mean age	FTE 55 years and over	%55 +	FTE 65 years and over	%65 +
General dentists	5712.1	48.5	2342.1	41.00%	712.0	12.47%
Periodontists	163.8	43.2	30.4	18.57%	3.1	1.89%
Orthodontists	380.1	48.1	136.8	36.00%	32.3	8.50%
Maxillofacial surgeon*	222.8	49.9	78.3	35.14%	16.8	7.54%

Source: RIZIV – INAMI data, KCE calculation;

Table 3 – Other demographic characteristics, 2021

		2021
Number of practising dentists, in FTE	Dutch-speaking*	3591.1 (55.4%)
	French-speaking*	2887.7 (44.6%)
	Incl. German-speaking**	28.4 (<1%)
Number of practising dentists per 10 000 population	Flanders	7.45
	Brussels	11.55
	Wallonia	6.89
Number of practising dentists per 10 000 population, in FTE	Flanders	5.59
	Brussels	7.40
	Wallonia	5.00

Source: RIZIV – INAMI data, KCE calculation; *Based on the contact language (either French or Dutch); **Based on the postal code of the contact address.


Table 4 – Density of practising dentists (per 10 000 population), per province and specialty, 2021

	Antwerp	Flemish Brabant	Walloon Brabant	West Flanders	East Flanders	Hainaut	Liège	Limburg	Luxembourg	Namur	Brussels	Belgium
General dentists	4.43	5.61	6.51	4.64	4.70	3.36	5.74	5.18	3.53	3.89	6.68	4.93
Periodontists	0.13	0.22	0.07	0.18	0.24	0.05	0.18	0.10	0.00	0.11	0.08	0.14
Orthodontists	0.33	0.40	0.42	0.28	0.37	0.14	0.38	0.30	0.27	0.19	0.47	0.33
Maxillofacial surgeons*	0.23	0.26	0.25	0.23	0.24	0.10	0.05	0.22	0.05	0.24	0.18	0.19
All dentists	5.12	6.50	7.26	5.33	5.54	3.65	6.36	5.80	3.85	4.44	7.40	5.59

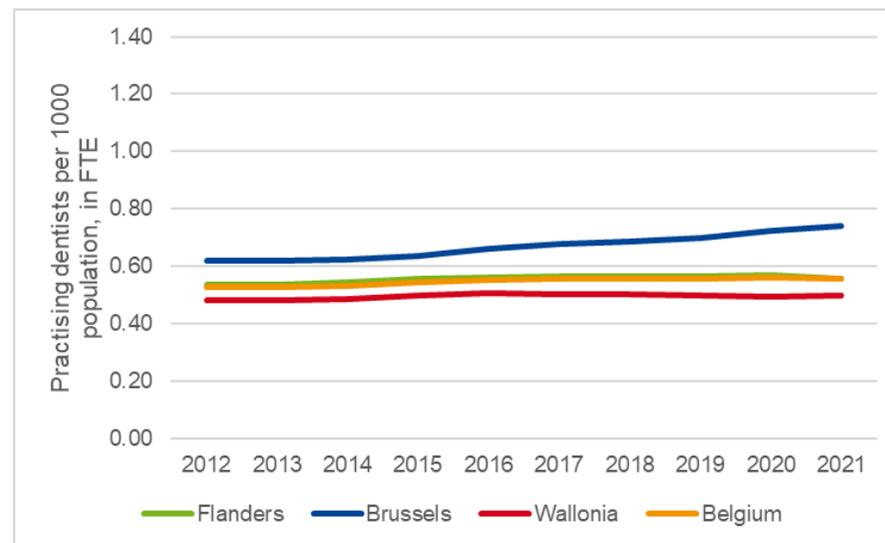
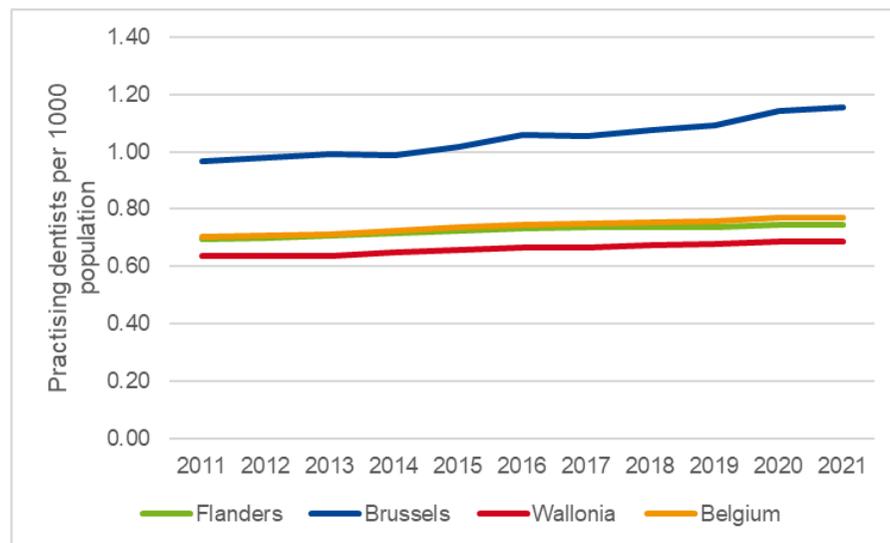
Source: RIZIV – INAMI data, KCE calculation. Densities for each province were compared to the overall Belgian density (relative difference): red cells = -40%, orange: -20%; light green = +20%, dark green = +40%.

Table 5 – Convention rate (Number of FTE practising dentists who totally or partially acceded to the agreement/FTE practising dentists), per province and specialty, 2021

	Antwerp	Flemish Brabant	Walloon Brabant	West Flanders	East Flanders	Hainaut	Liège	Limburg	Luxembourg	Namur	Brussels	Belgium
General dentists	28.2%	46.2%	46.2%	45.8%	42.0%	58.6%	82.1%	56.7%	60.3%	58.0%	64.8%	52.2%
Periodontists	0.1%	13.4%	0.0%	16.8%	8.1%	0.0%	44.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	11.7%
Orthodontists	4.2%	2.5%	3.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	6.7%	2.1%	3.0%	0.0%	5.5%	2.9%
Maxillofacial surgeons*	40.1%	66.2%	65.1%	53.0%	40.5%	79.0%	34.7%	53.8%	63.9%	97.9%	73.4%	56.5%
All dentists	26.5%	43.2%	43.9%	42.7%	37.7%	56.1%	76.1%	52.8%	56.3%	56.2%	60.6%	48.4%

Source: RIZIV – INAMI data, KCE calculation

Figure 1 – Density of practising dentists (in head count and in FTE), per 1000 population, per region, evolution 2011-2022



Source: RIZIV – INAMI data, KCE calculation

International comparison

The evolution in the density of practising dentists per 1000 population in Belgium is in line with the EU-27 average, with a percentage increase of +10.0% and +12.5% between 2010 and 2020 respectively. The average density based on EU-14 countries was more stable over the years (+4.0% between 2010 and 2020).

Between 2010 and 2014, the number of practising dentists per 1000 population in Belgium was close to the EU-27 average and lower than the EU-14 average. Between 2015 and 2018, the Belgian density was higher

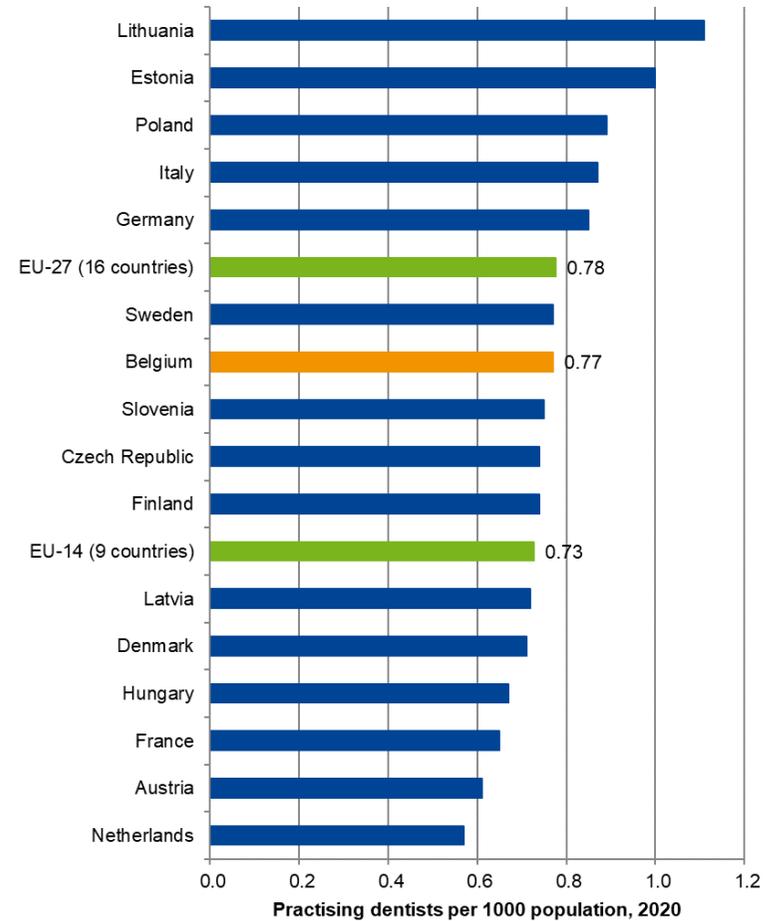
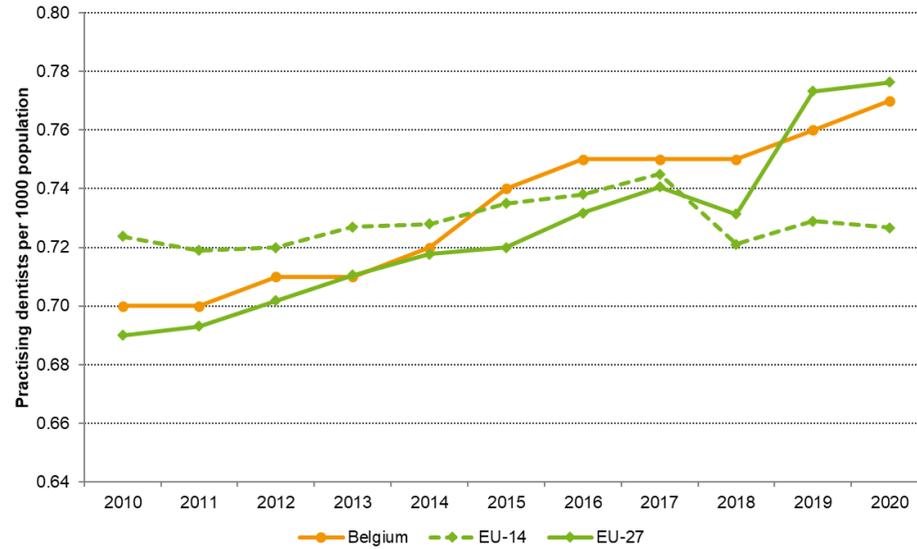
than both the EU-14 and EU-27 average. In 2019 and 2020, Belgium was between the EU -27 average (0.78 per 1000 population in 2020) and the EU-14 average (0.73 per 1000 population in 2020; see Figure 2).

Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic

No clear impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the density of practising dentists in Belgium can be highlighted (see Figure 1).



Figure 2 – Density of practising dentists per 1000 population (in head counts): international comparison (2010-2020)



Source: OECD health data 2023

Key points

- To allow for international comparison, OECD definitions are used. The number of practising dentists therefore also include maxillofacial surgeons/stomatologists.
- In 2021, there were 8 926 practising dentists (6 478.8 in FTE), with a density of 0.77 per 1000 population (0.56 in FTE).
- Only 48.4% of FTE practising dentists acceded to the agreement and this proportion decreased by 15.8 percentage points compared to 2012. The analysis per specialty showed that in 2021, the proportion of periodontists and orthodontists that acceded to the agreement was much lower than the proportion general dentists who did so (11.7% and 2.9% compared to 52.2% respectively). This proportion varied considerably between the provinces and in some of them, no periodontist and orthodontist acceded to the agreement.

- The evolution in the Belgian density of practising dentists per 1000 population is in line with the EU-27 average, with an increase of +10.0% and +12.5% between 2010 and 2020 respectively. The average density based on EU-14 countries was more stable (+4.0%). In 2020, the Belgian density of practising dentists per 1000 population (0.77 per 1000 population) was close to the EU-27 average (0.78 per 1000 population) and above the EU-14 average (0.73 per 1000 population).

References

1. OECD. OECD Health Statistics 2023 [Web page].2023 [cited 5 May 2023]. Available from: <https://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?ThemeTreeId=9>
2. OECD. Health at a Glance 2017: OECD Indicators. Paris: 2017. Available from: http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/health_glance-2017-en