



1.1 Number of clinical psychologists registered at RIZIV – INAMI (/10 000) (MH-12)

1.1.1 Documentation sheet

Description	Number of registered clinical psychologists at RIZIV – INAMI per 10 000 population
Calculation	Numerator: Number of registered psychologists at RIZIV – INAMI x 10 000 Denominator: Total end of year Belgian population
Rationale	<p>The number of care providers gives important information on the medical workforce and thus the accessibility of healthcare. Together with the number of graduates, this information can be used for health providers supply planning. People with mental health problems may receive help from a variety of professionals, including psychologists.</p> <p>Following a pilot project in 2019, Belgium's 'mental health master plan' or the reform of "the approach, organisation and funding of front-line mental healthcare" has been implemented on the ground starting in January 2022.¹ The objective of this reform is to maximise mental health and ensure accessible quality mental healthcare with a low-threshold. As part of this reform, a visit to a clinical psychologist or to a clinical remedial educationalist is now directly reimbursed by the health insurance fund. Adults are entitled to maximum 18 individual or group sessions (of which maximum 10 individual sessions) with a psychologist in primary care.² In specialised care for people who require more specific or intensive care because of more serious psychological problems, this increases to an average of 10 individual sessions (maximum 20) and maximum 15 group sessions. Children and adolescents up to 23 years of age are entitled to more sessions in primary care.</p> <p>Only registered psychologists can claim health insurance reimbursement. Psychologists are registered if they have signed an agreement with a care network, which obliges them to participate in supervision, activities and to develop a multidisciplinary approach.</p> <p>Following COVID-19 pandemic, a lot of countries increased the funds available for psychological care or therapies.³ In Belgium, to alleviate the difficulties in accessing psychiatric services during the pandemic, the government provided a 16.7 million euro boost to front-line psychological care for children/adolescents and the elderly, along with measures to "decentralise" care (reimbursement of video consultations, home treatments).⁴</p>
Data source	RIZIV – INAMI annual statistics
Technical definitions	<p>Registered clinical psychologists only include psychologists that have an INAMI – RIZIV number.</p> <p>A clinical psychologist is a professional who has completed formal training in psychology during a five years master's program at a recognised university-level school completed with one year supervised practice.⁵ They are formally licensed as a health profession. Currently, the one year supervised practice is not yet in place. Clinical psychologists apply the science of psychology to prevent, detect and treat (mental) health problems and promote (mental) health either with individuals, groups or their environment.</p> <p>Regional data is based on the region of the clinical psychologist's residence.</p>
International comparability	No international comparison was included as the number of clinical psychologists registered at RIZIV – INAMI in Belgium is not comparable with the total number of psychologists reported by other countries.



Limitations	Data for Belgium were only available for the year 2022.
Dimensions	Accessibility, Health workforce
Related indicators	Medical graduates, Number of practising psychiatrists
Reviewer	Koen Lowet (CM – MC)

1.1.2 Results

Belgium

In 2022, the number of registered clinical psychologists at RIZIV – INAMI was 2891, corresponding to a density of 2.47 per 10 000 inhabitants (see Table 1). In Belgium, among the 14 641 licensed clinical psychologists, 19.75% were registered at RIZIV – INAMI.

Regional comparison

At the regional level, the density of registered clinical psychologists was slightly higher in Wallonia (2.62 per 10 000 inhabitants) than in Flanders (2.42) and Brussels (2.29). The number of psychologists also varied within region (see Figure 1). The share of licensed psychologists who were registered at RIZIV–INAMI was highest in Wallonia (25.30%), than Brussels (19.64%) and Flanders (17.50%).

Furthermore, a recent report indicated that the new primary mental healthcare agreement improved accessibility to psychological care. The average delay time^a to psychological care for patients within the agreement is 8.2 years and the median delay time is 4 years, while the average delay time in Belgium is 10 to 15 years (regardless of the agreement).⁶ Patients who have never received professional treatment before are reached more often through a focal point (i.e. location outside the clinical psychologist or orthopaedist's own practice) compared to those who already received professional treatment before or in the past 12 months. A quarter of vulnerable patients are reached through focal points, and in particular low-socioeconomic patients.⁶

^a The number of years between the first time they experienced mental health problems and the time they enter professional treatment – except for primary care and specialised care treatment.

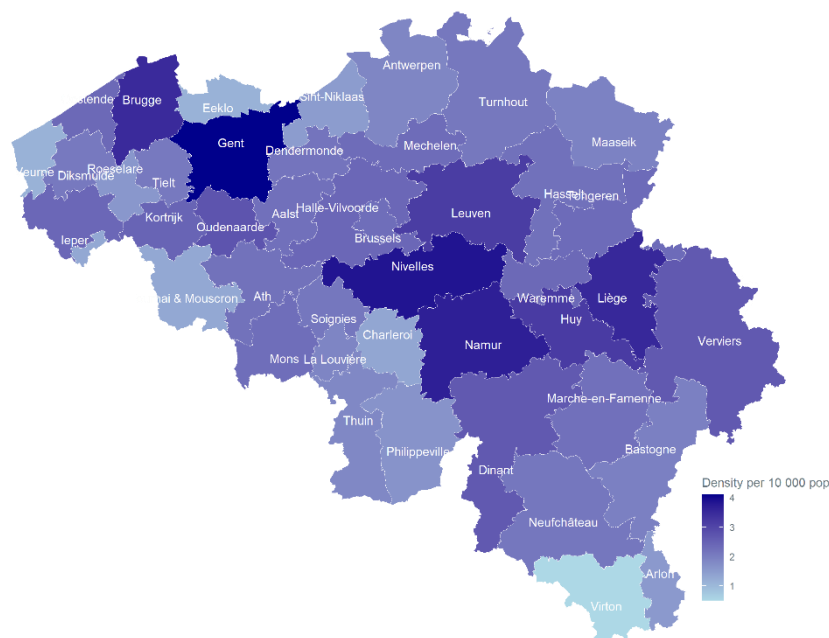


Table 1 – Number of registered and licensed clinical psychologists (2022)

	Registered at RIZIV – INAMI			Licensed	
	Headcount	Density per 10 000	% of licensed clinical psychologists	Headcount	Density per 10 000
Belgium	2891	2.47	19.75	14 641	12.52
Region					
Brussels	284	2.29	19.64	1446	11.65
Flanders	1642	2.42	17.50	9381	25.48
Wallonia	965	2.62	25.30	3814	3.26
Province					
Antwerp	386	2.02	16.39	2355	12.32
Flemish Brabant	326	2.75	15.73	2073	17.46
West Flanders	301	2.47	24.27	1240	10.16
East Flanders	434	2.78	16.27	2668	17.09
Limbourg	195	2.18	18.66	1045	11.68
Walloon Brabant	160	3.87	21.08	759	18.38
Hainaut	238	1.75	23.82	999	7.36
Liège	356	3.19	27.47	1296	11.62
Luxembourg	51	1.73	24.88	205	6.97
Namur	160	3.19	28.83	555	11.05



Figure 1 – Density of registered psychologists: number of psychologists per 10 000 inhabitants (2022)



Source: INAMI – RIZIV (based on the home address of the psychologist); calculation: KCE

Key points

- The density of registered clinical psychologists was 2.5 per 10 000 population in 2022.
- The density of registered psychologists in 2022 was slightly higher in Wallonia (2.62 per 10 000 pop.) than in Flanders (2.42 per 10 000 pop.) and Brussels (2.29 per 10 000 pop.); however, the region is based on the home address of psychologists, giving little information on the effective workplace.

References

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