

## Metadata – Use of psychotropic medicines

<b>Description</b>	Percentage of the population aged 15 years and over that used sedatives (tranquilizers or sleeping tablets) in the past 2 weeks Percentage of the population aged 15 years and over that used antidepressants in the past 2 weeks
<b>Rationale</b>	Antidepressant use is increasing continuously in most European countries, leading to an increased burden on the healthcare system. For these treatments to be effective, patients need to be adequately diagnosed and followed-up.
<b>Primary Data source</b>	Health Interview Surveys 1997, 2001, 2004, 2008, 2013, 2018
<b>Indicator source</b>	Sciensano: Health Interview Surveys 1997, 2001, 2004, 2008, 2013, 2018
<b>Periodicity</b>	Every 3 to 5 years
<b>Calculation, technical definitions, and limitations</b>	<p>These indicators are based on 2 questions asked in the Belgian HIS to the population aged 15 years and older.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- “During the past 2 weeks, have you used any sleeping tablets or tranquilizers that were prescribed for you by a doctor? “</li><li>- “During the past 2 weeks, have you used any antidepressants that were prescribed for you by a doctor?”</li></ul> <p>These questions referred only to drugs prescribed by a doctor.</p> <p>These percentages were weighted according to the survey design of the HIS.</p> <p>Limitations: The evaluation of the use of psychotropic medicines based on this indicator has several limitations. These are mainly due to the fact that estimates rely on self-reported data rather than medical prescriptions or clinical records, which provide more objective assessments. Nevertheless, findings from general population health surveys are generally consistent with those from specific health surveys.</p>
<b>International comparability</b>	a. Availability: OECD makes available international comparisons in the consumption of ‘hypnotics and sedatives’ and ‘antidepressants’.