1.1 Fall incidents during the last month in homes for older people (% of residents) (OLD-7)

1.1.1 Documentation sheet

Description	Percentage of residents of rest homes and rest and nursing homes who had a fall incident in the previous month (data from Flemish quality indicators in homes for older people)
Calculation	Numerator: number of residents who had at least one fall during the month of May Denominator: total number of residents in the month of May
Rationale	Fall incidents are a common cause of morbidity and mortality in older persons. Persons who fell once, have an increased risk for future fall incidents. It is estimated that one in 10 falls result in a hip fracture or other severe injury, which often lead to functional impairment and even death. [1] [2] The recovery from a fall is strongly related to the functional status of the older person before the fall.[3] The functional status of an older person in turn is influenced by the institution's fixation policy. The more mobile the older persons can remain, the less likely they are to fall. The European Injury Database (IDB) showed that falls are a major cause of death (28%) in older people (60+y), particularly in women. Fall injuries lead also to a higher than average hospitalisation rate and an excess share in medical costs due to injuries in this age group.[4] Due to the ageing population, the incidence of falls, related injuries and healthcare costs are expected to increase.
Data source	• Flemish quality indicators in homes for older people: 2016-2021 data: https://zorgkwaliteit.be/woonzorgcentra [5] • Health Interview Survey (HIS): data from 2018 on fall incidence in older persons (module '*ongevallen*'-'*accidents*'): https://www.sciensano.be/sites/default/files/ai_report_2018_nl.pdf In the future, data collection on this indicator will be possible by the roll out of BelRAI. BelRAI measures fall incidents as part of the Long-Term Care Facility (LTCF) and Home Care (HC) modules. Currently BelRAI is being implemented but not yet nationally fully operational in all care settings. (http://wiki.belrai.org/nl/)
Technical definitions	Flemish quality indicator projects: • Numerator: number of residents that had at least one fall incident in the month of September • Denominator: number of residents that were present for at least one day in the rest or rest and nursing homes (WZC) in the month of September HIS: • Percentage of the population aged 65 years and over that had a fall incident in the previous 12 months
International comparability	No recent international data available. Some older data (published in 2012 and 2013) are available from the European Services and Health for Elderly in Long TERm Care (SHELTER) project.[6, 7]
Limitations	Data on fall incidents in homes for older people are currently only available for Flanders and not for the Walloon or Brussels region.

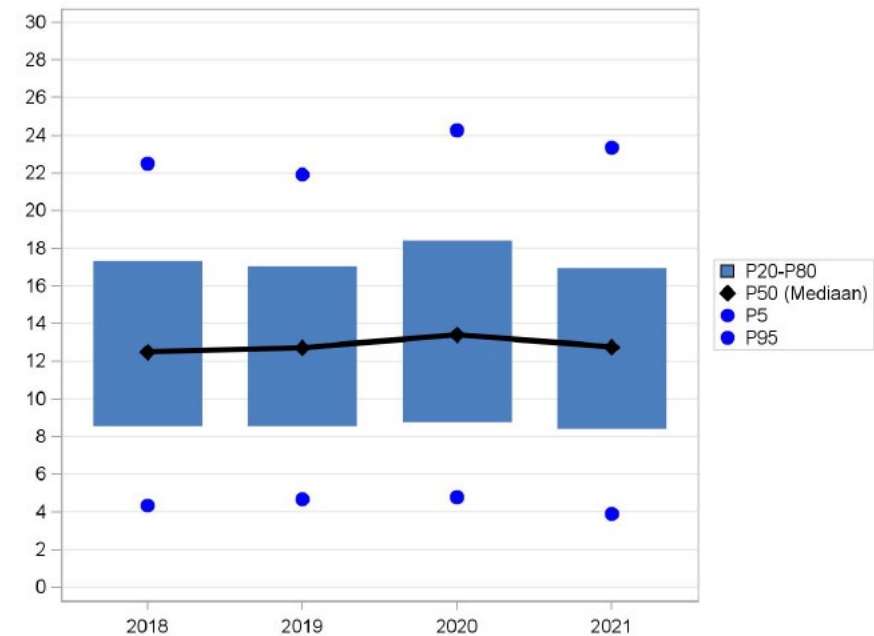| **Dimensions**	Care for older persons; Quality (safety)
Related indicators	
Reviewers	Kathleen Leemans (Vlaams Instituut voor Kwaliteit van Zorg), Chris Rogier (Departement Zorg)

1.1.2   Results

<u>Fall incidents in homes for older people</u>

Flanders region

Data on fall incidents in homes for older persons and nursing homes are only available for the Flemish community, where they are measured in the context of the Flemish Indicator Project. The data from the Flemish region (see Figure 1) show that in 2021 a median of 12.8% of residents in rest or rest and nursing homes had a fall incident during a period of a month. Data from the preceding years (2018-2020) are relatively close to the data from 2021. Data from 2016-2017 show however a slightly lower median of 11.6% and 11.7% (see Figure 2). Time analysis of the average data over the full period 2016-2021 shows an average yearly increase by 0.35% for this indicator.[5]
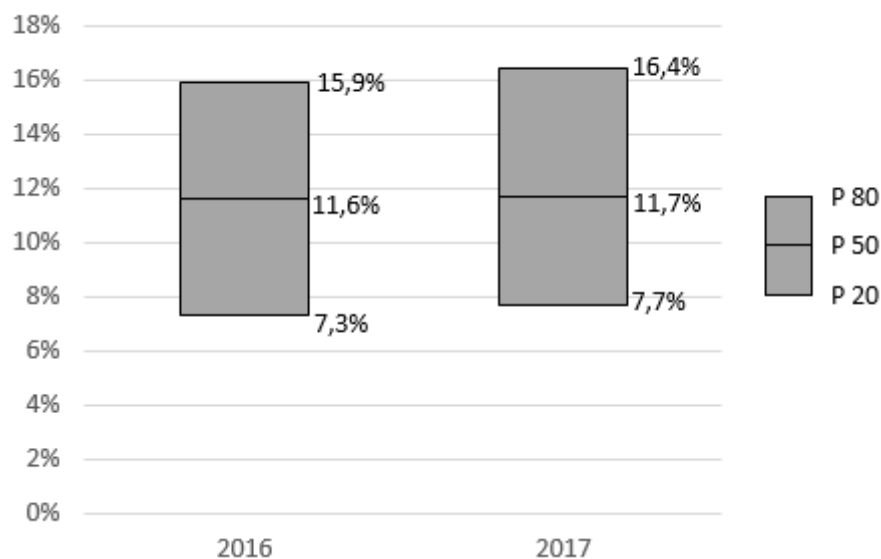
Figure 1 – Fall incidents during the last month in homes for older people (% of residents): one or more fall incidents (2018-2021)

Source: Vlaams Instituut voor Kwaliteit van Zorg. Available from: https://zorgkwaliteit.be/woonzorgcentra

Figure 2 – Fall incidents during the last month in homes for older people (% of residents): one or more fall incidents (2016-2017)

Source: Vlaams Instituut voor Kwaliteit van Zorg. Available from: https://zorgkwaliteit.be/woonzorgcentra

Fall incidents in the population aged 65 years and over

Belgium

Besides these Flemish data on fall incidents in rest or rest and nursing homes, there are Belgian data on fall incidents in older persons overall (regardless of whether they stay at home or in a rest or rest and nursing home). These data on fall incidents in older persons are notably reported in the Health Interview Survey (HIS). The most recent data from HIS, for the year 2018, show that in Belgium, 17.4% of the population aged 65 years and over had a fall incident in the 12 months preceding the interview. The average frequency of falls in this population was 2.4 times.

After correction for age and gender, the fall incidence dropped significantly over the years: from 23.8% in 2008, over 20.3% in 2013, to 17.4% in 2018 (see Figure 3). [8]
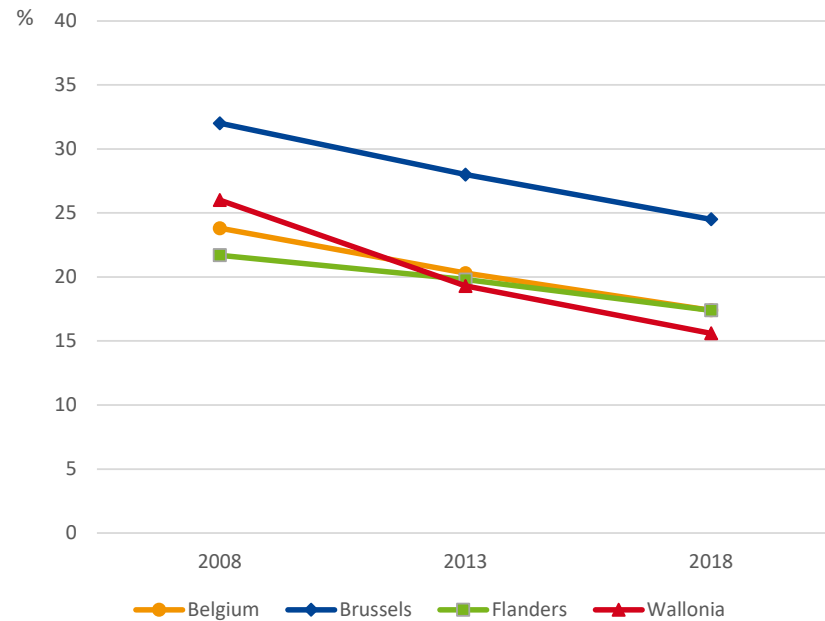
Analysis by demographic characteristics

The percentage of women who had a fall incident in the 12 preceding months (20.9%) is higher than of men (12.8%).

Regional comparison

The fall incidence in the population aged 65 years and over is higher in Brussels-Capital region (24.5%) than in the Flemish region (17.4%) and the Walloon region (15.6%).

Figure 3 – Fall incidents in people aged 65 years and over in 12 months preceding the interview (2008-2013-2018)

Source: Based on HIS

Key points

- A median of 13% of residents in Flemish homes for older persons and nursing homes had a fall incident in a month time in 2021.

- Over time, the fall incidence in older persons (at home or in home for older people) dropped considerably: from 23.8% in 2008, over 20.3% in 2013, to 17.4% in 2018 (data from HIS on fall incidents in people aged 65 years and over in 12 months preceding the interview).

- Policy initiatives to prevent fall injuries in older persons should be continued.

References

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