

PREVALENCE ESTIMATION OF HCV

**Among people who inject drugs in Belgium
through respondent driven sampling, capture-
recapture and multiplier method**

**Els Plettinckx – Unit Illicit drugs – Epidemiology and Public Health
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Background

Chronic HCV worldwide:

- 71 million people
- Incubation period: 2 weeks to 6 months

Belgium:

- Lack of data
- Especially people at risk





Aim

- ✓ Recent and accurate **prevalence** data of HCV antibodies

Target population: PWID

- ✓ People injected in the last 12 months
- ✓ Questionnaire and rapid HCV-test

Methods

Respondent-driven sampling (RDS)

- February – April 2019
- Seeds and waves
- Three coupons
- Unique identifying number



Capture-recapture (CRC)

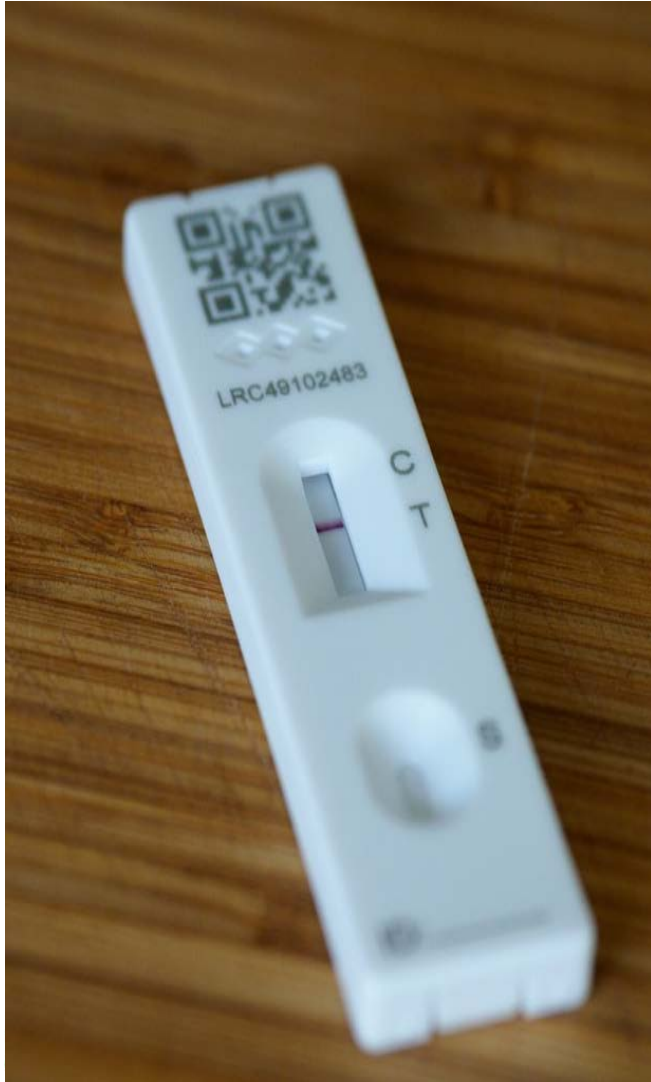
- February – April 2019
- RDS, Treatment and harm reduction services
- Unique identifying number
- Probabilistic matching



Multiplier method (MM)

- National estimates:
- Treatment demand indicator
- Opioid substitution treatment register

Results



Results RDS

- N=253
- 43,4% (95%CI 28,9%-58,0%) HCV antibodies

Population estimates

- 305 (95%CI 97 – 545) PWID in Brussels
- Between 2875 (95%CI 897 – 5159) and 3198 (95%CI 709 – 6656) PWID in Belgium

CONCLUDING REMARKS

- Prevalence of HCV antibodies in Brussels is lower compared to prevalence estimates reported in Europe



Photos by Danielle Rice, Afif Kusuma and Brett Jordan on Unsplash

Contact

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Further reading

Van Baelen, L., Plettinckx, E., Antoine, J., & Gremeaux, L. (2020). Prevalence of HCV among people who inject drugs in Brussels-a respondent-driven sampling survey. *Harm reduction journal*, 17(1), 11. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12954-020-00358-3>

Plettinckx, E., Crawford, F. W., Antoine, J., Gremeaux, L., & Van Baelen, L. (2021). Estimates of people who injected drugs within the last 12 months in Belgium based on a capture-recapture and multiplier method. *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*, 219, 108436. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.drugalcdep.2020.108436>