

Belgium

Population (January 2013):	11 161 642
Human development index (2013):	0.881
HAV vaccine recommendations:	HAV vaccination is not offered in the national childhood immunisation programme. Vaccination is recommended for: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. travellers to endemic areas 2. MSM and bisexual men 3. candidates for liver transplantation and patients with chronic liver disease (including patients with hepatitis B and C) 4. haemophiliacs 5. contacts of HAV patients 6. staff and residents of institutions for patients with mental health conditions, people active in the food chain 7. children and adolescents of emigrants returning to their country of origin, close contacts adoptees from a country with high prevalence of hepatitis A.
Seroprevalence studies by quality score:	score 0:1 study score 1:6 studies; score 2: 2 studies
Seroprevalence studies timeframe:	1976–2003

Summary assessment: **very low**
 Incidence assessment: **low**
 Susceptibility in adults: **high**

Five surveys conducted before 1990 estimated HAV seroprevalence in the under 30 years of age: three of these estimated seroprevalence over 50% and the remaining two, conducted in 1989, below 50%.

Belgium_Table 1. Hepatitis A seroprevalence level by time period

	Very low endemicity	Low endemicity	Intermediate endemicity
1975–1989			
1990–1999			
2000–2013			

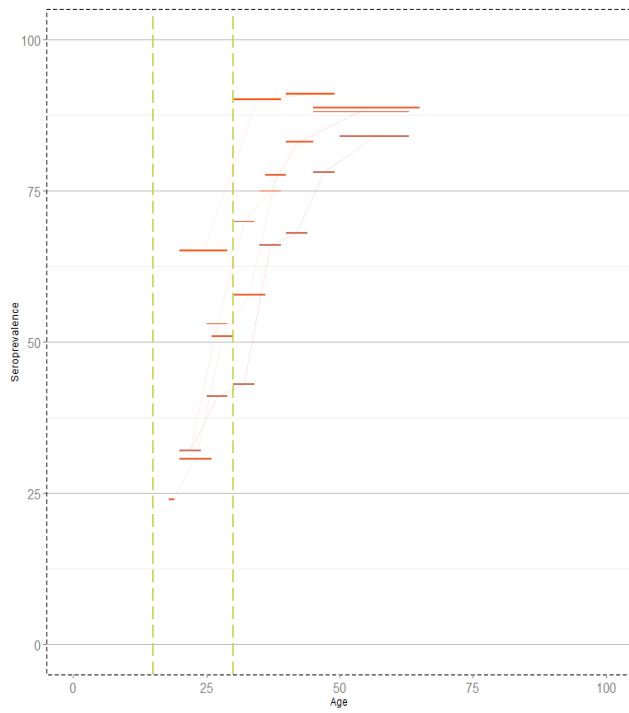
Three studies were conducted between 1990 and 2000 and all presented seroprevalence estimates below 50% by age 30. In 2003, HAV seroprevalence was 26% in the age group from 30 to 39 years. Therefore, Belgium is a very low endemicity country (Belgium_FFfigure 1) and has likely been since the end of the 1980s.

The highest reported incidence was 7/100 000 in 1993, and has steadily been decreasing since (Belgium_FFfigure 2). Incidence from TESSy data has been lower than 2/ 100 000 from 2008 and is consistent with a low/very low endemicity picture.

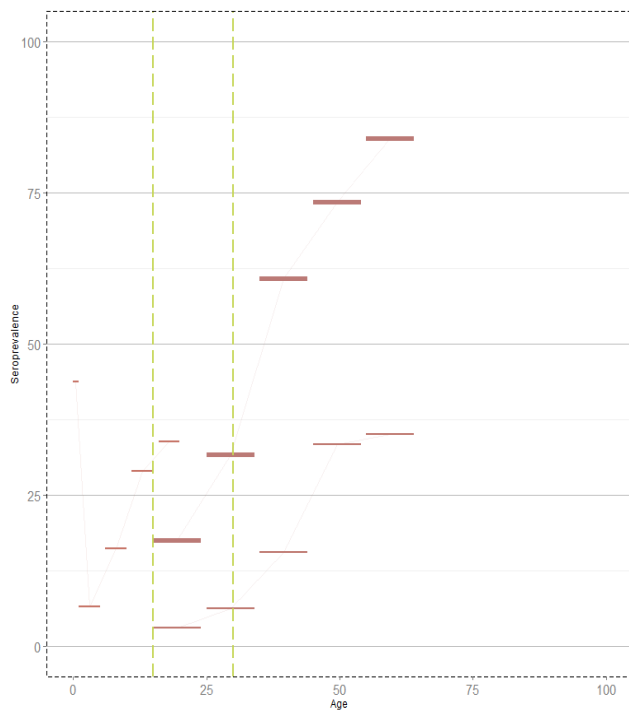
The susceptibility was estimated to be above 70% by the age of 30 and around 40% at the age of 50. Therefore the susceptibility in adults is considered to be high.

Belgium_Figure 1. Summary of seroprevalence in Belgium, by age and time period

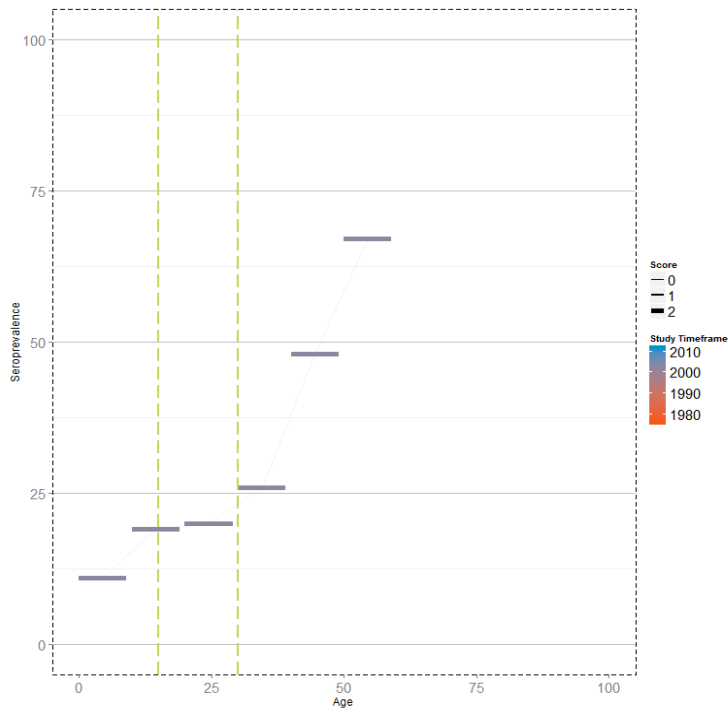
Panel a.1: 1975–1989



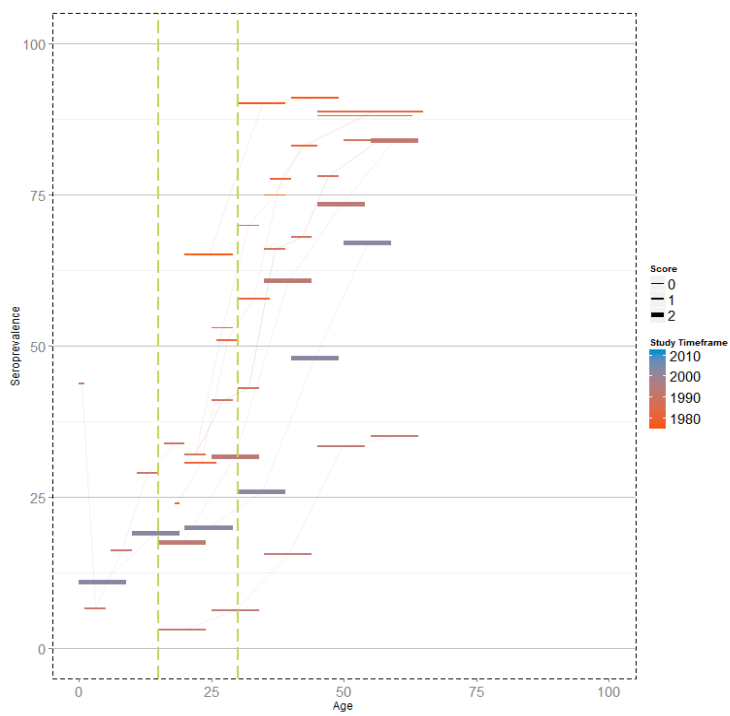
Panel a.2: 1990–1999

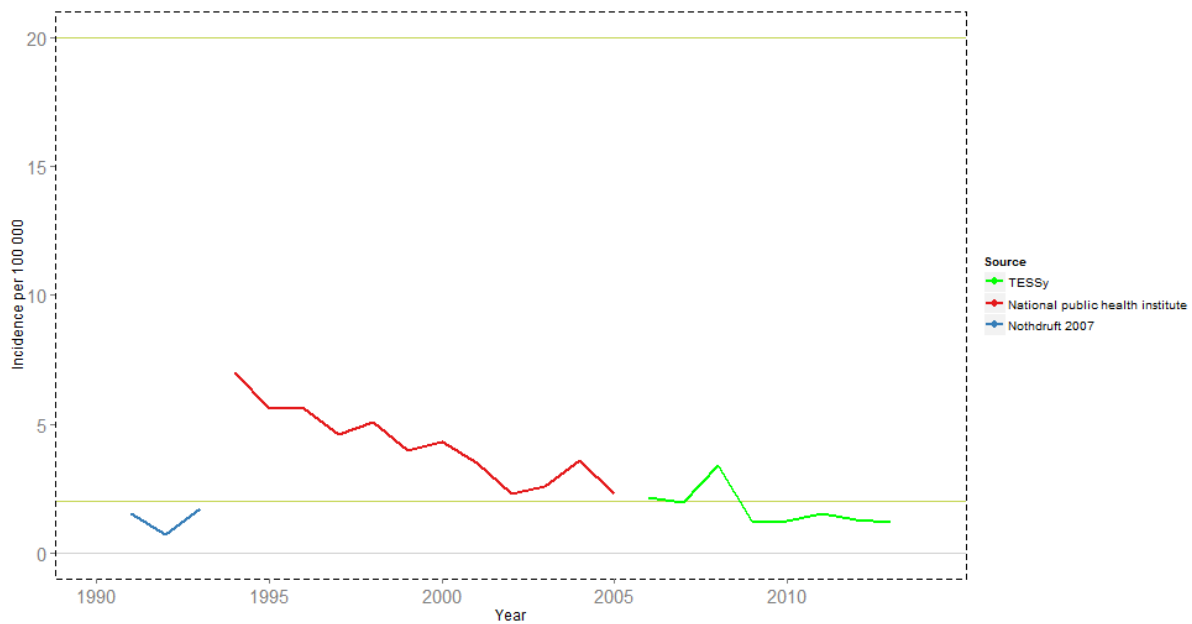


Panel a.3: 2000–2013



Belgium_Figure 1 (panel b). Summary of seroprevalence in Belgium, by age and time period (1975–2013)



Belgium_Figure 2. Reported incidence of hepatitis A, Belgium, 1990–2013

National data source: <http://www.health.belgium.be/eportal>

Bibliography

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