

# Statistics on pharmaceuticals 2025

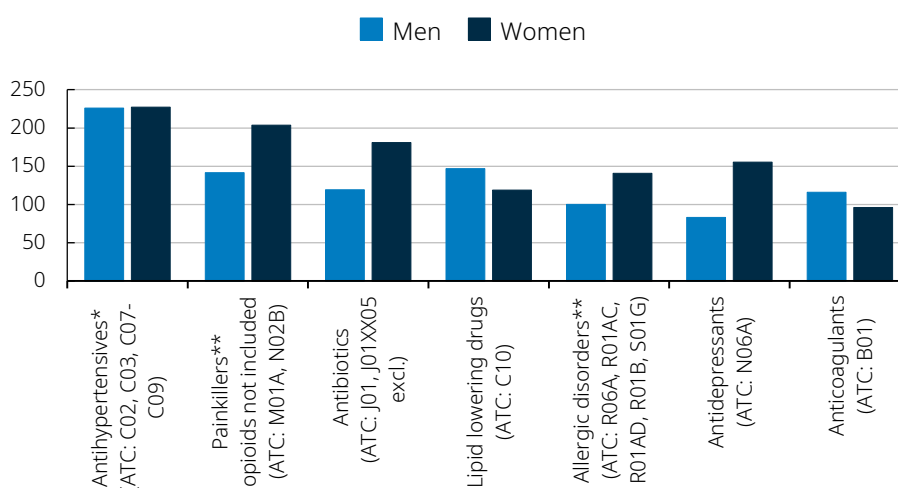
**In 2025, women retrieved more prescribed medication than men. Retrievals increased significantly for diabetes and obesity drugs of the GLP-1 and GIP agonist type. Retrievals of systemic estrogens also increased, and with large socioeconomic differences between different areas. More than 80 percent of those aged 75 and over retrieved medication for high blood pressure.**

## Women are retrieving more prescribed medication than men

In 2025, 68 percent of Sweden's population retrieved at least one prescription drug. For women, the proportion was 75 percent. The corresponding figure for men was 61 percent. Antihypertensive drugs were the group of medicines prescribed to the largest number of patients. In the same year, almost 2.4 million patients collected this type of medicine from pharmacies, which corresponds to 23 percent of the population. The next most common drug groups were painkillers, antibiotics, drugs treating allergic disorders, blood lipid lowering agents, antidepressants, and anticoagulants.

**Figure 1. The seven most common drug groups in 2025, by gender**

Number of patients per 1000 inhabitants



Source: The National Prescribed Drug Register, National Board of Health and Welfare. \* Excluding C02AC02 and C07AA07 \*\* The group contains certain medicines that can also be bought without a prescription

Women retrieved more medications in all drug groups than men except for lipid lowering drugs and anticoagulants, which were retrieved by more men. The gender difference was greatest for antidepressants, which were retrieved by 16 percent of women compared to 8 percent of men. The gender difference was also high for painkillers and antibiotics. In 2025, 20 percent of women and 14 percent of men retrieved at least one prescription for painkillers, while the corresponding figures for antibiotics were 18 percent among women and 12 percent among men.

### **About the statistics**

The statistics show the number of people that have retrieved the prescribed pharmaceutical in question at least once during one year from a pharmacy. The statistics do not include pharmaceuticals without prescription or those distributed by institutions with their own pharmaceutical stocks such as hospitals.

Some drug groups include pharmaceuticals that are also available over the counter. Drugs are grouped into ATC codes based on the main indication, but often have several different indications. For example, drugs in the *anti-hypertensives* group are also used for other indications such as cardiovascular failure and ischaemic heart disease.

## Significant increase for diabetes and obesity drugs of the GLP-1 and GIP agonist type

Prescription drugs of GLP-1 and GIP agonist type are used for the treatment of type 2 diabetes and for weight control in overweight and obesity. This type of substances includes dulaglutide, liraglutide, semaglutide, and tirzepatide. The majority of pharmacy retrievals in 2025 were for semaglutide (brand names Ozempic, Rybelsus, and Wegovy) and tirzepatide (brand name Mounjaro).

In 2025, 2.5 percent of the population, or 261,000 people, retrieved medicines containing semaglutide from pharmacies. The corresponding share the year before was 1.7 percent. The increase in one year was 0.8 percentage points, or 48 percent in relative terms. In 2021, 0.5 percent of the population collected semaglutide. The increase in four years was thus 1.9 percentage points, or 351 percent in relative terms<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> The proportions in the text are rounded, which may result in differences and ratios not matching exactly.

Retrievals of semaglutide are increasing at a faster rate for women than for men. In 2025, 2.2 percent of men and 2.8 percent of women collected medicines containing this drug substance. The corresponding shares the year before were 1.6 percent and 1.8 percent, respectively. In 2021, more men than women collected semaglutide, 0.6 percent and 0.5 percent.

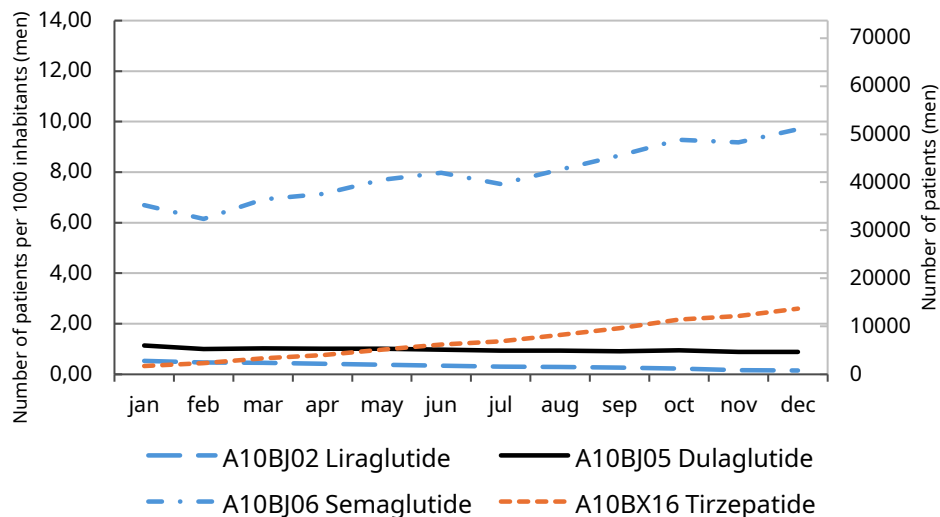
Tirzepatide began to be sold in pharmacies in Sweden at the end of 2024, with relatively few retrievals that year (less than 0.1 percent of the population for men and women on a yearly basis). In 2025, the proportion of people who collected tirzepatide increased to 0.9 percent of the population, or 95,000 people. For women, this proportion was 1.3 percent, and for men 0.5 percent.

Retrievals of liraglutide and dulaglutide, which were launched earlier than semaglutide and tirzepatide, decreased at the same time between 2024 and 2025, from 0.3 percent to 0.2 percent for both drugs. For dulaglutide, the proportion was the same for men and women in 2025. For liraglutide, it was 0.1 percent for men and 0.3 percent for women.

Monthly withdrawals of GLP-1 and GIP agonists in 2025 are shown in the figures below.

**Figure 2. Retrievals of GLP-1- and GIP-agonists among men, monthly in 2025.**

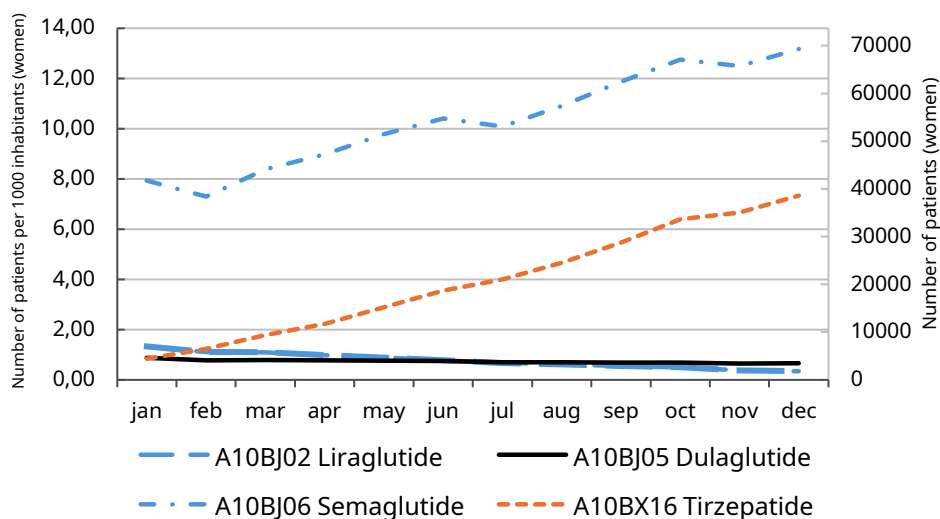
Number of patients, absolute numbers and per 1000 inhabitants.



Source: The National Prescribed Drug Register, National Board of Health and Welfare.  
 The number of unique patients on a monthly basis is not the same measure as the corresponding data on an annual basis.

**Figure 3. Retrievals of GLP-1- and GIP-agonists among women, monthly in 2025.**

Number of patients, absolute numbers and per 1000 inhabitants.



Source: The National Prescribed Drug Register, National Board of Health and Welfare.

The number of unique patients on a monthly basis is not the same measure as the corresponding data on an annual basis.

### More on GLP-1- and GIP agonists

Semaglutide began to be sold in Swedish pharmacies in 2018, then under the product name Ozempic, with the indication type 2 diabetes. The brand Rybelsus was added in 2020, with the same indication. Wegovy, which has the indication weight control, began to be sold in pharmacies in 2023.

Tirzepatide, which became available in pharmacies in 2024, is marketed under the product name Mounjaro. Tirzepatide has both type 2 diabetes and weight control as indications.

Liraglutide is available under several product names and became available in pharmacies in 2010. Dulaglutide is marketed under the product name Trulicity and began to be sold in pharmacies in 2015.

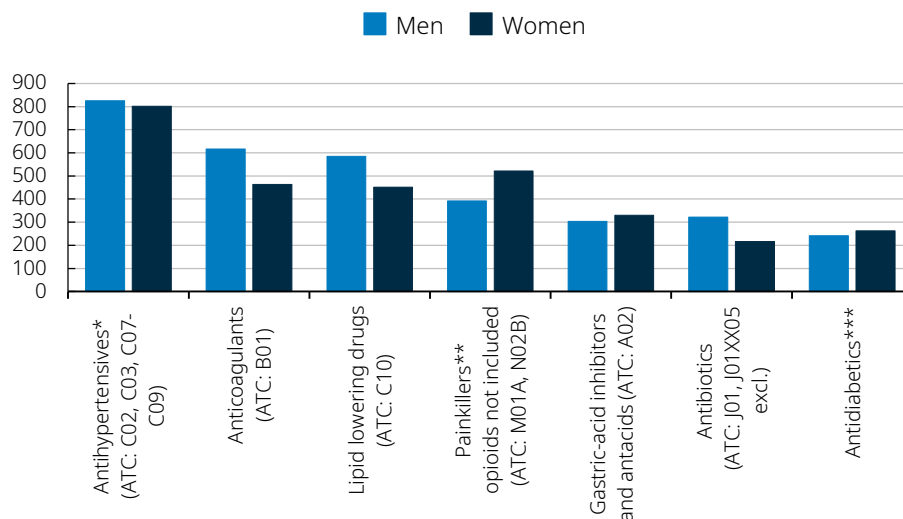
The group of GLP-1 and GIP agonists also includes exenatide and lisenatide, but they are no longer sold in Sweden.

## More than 80 percent of elderly take antihypertensive drugs

In 2025 more than 80 percent of people aged 75 and over retrieved antihypertensive drugs. The next most common groups of medicines among older people were anticoagulants, blood lipid lowering agents, painkillers, gastric-acid inhibitors and antacids, antibiotics, and antidiabetics. Among these groups, the gender difference was greatest for anticoagulants, which were retrieved by 62 percent of men compared to 46 percent of women. The gender difference was also large for painkillers, but in the opposite direction: 52 percent of women compared to 39 percent of men.

**Figure 2. The seven most common drug groups among people aged 75 and over in 2025, by gender.**

Number of patients per 1000 inhabitants



\* Excluding C02AC02 and C07AA07 \*\* The group contains certain medicines that can also be bought without a prescription \*\*\* The group contains medicines for which many patients have indications other than diabetes.

Source: The National Prescribed Drug Register, National Board of Health and Welfare.

## Systemic estrogens are significantly more common in areas with good socioeconomic status

Systemic estrogens and estrogens in combination with progestogens are prescribed to women for the treatment of estrogen deficiency symptoms<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> ATC codes: G03C and G03F. Locally acting estrogens such as estriol (ATC code G03CA04), as well as the products Oestring, Vagidonna, Vagifem, and Vagirux, which contain estradiol (ATC code G03CA03), are excluded. Hormonal contraceptives for systemic use containing progestogens in combination with estrogens are not included in the population.

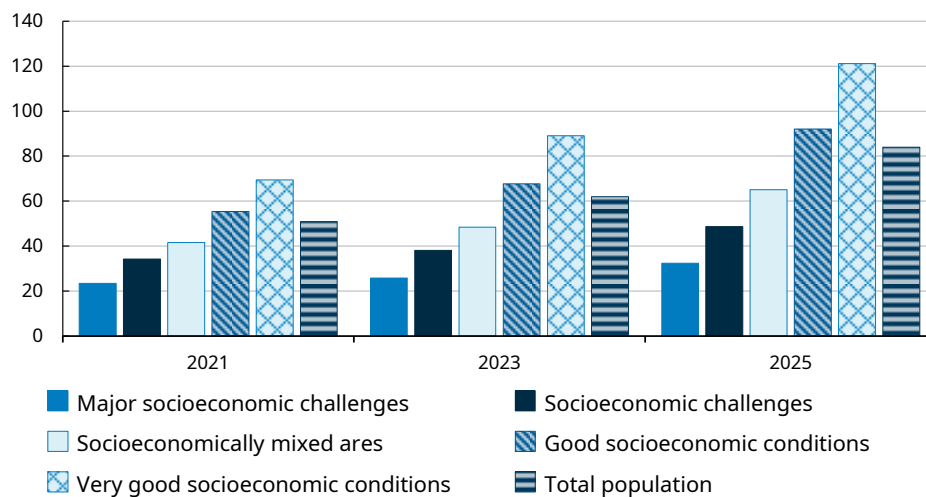
The most frequently retrieved pharmaceutical substances in this group are estradiol, as well as norethisterone and estrogen in combination. In 2025, over 90 percent of the retrievals were made by women who were 45 years of age or older.

The following diagram shows retrieved pharmaceuticals in this group by regional statistical area (RegSO). Each RegSO has been linked to an area type that is based on a socioeconomic index. The area types are ranked from areas with major socioeconomic challenges to areas with very good socioeconomic conditions.

To make comparisons between areas fairer, the results have been age-standardized. This means that we have taken into account that the age distribution differs between different areas.

**Figure 5. Systemic estrogens, by area type according to RegSO. Years 2021, 2023 and 2025. Women, 45+ years old, after age standardization.**

Number of patients per 1000 inhabitants (women, 45+ y.o.).



Source: The National Prescribed Drug Register, National Board of Health and Welfare.

Systemic estrogens were retrieved to a significantly greater extent in areas with better socioeconomic conditions, in 2025 but also in 2023 and 2021. Differences between area types have become greater between 2021 and 2025.

In areas with major socioeconomic challenges, the proportion of women in the population who retrieved systemic estrogens increased from 2.3 percent in 2021 to 2.6 percent in 2023 and 3.2 percent in 2025.

In areas with very good socioeconomic conditions, the respective proportion increased at the same time from 6.9 percent in 2021 to 8.9 percent in 2023 and 12.1 percent in 2025.

In four years, the proportion of women who retrieved systemically acting estrogens increased by 0.9 percentage points in areas with major socioeconomic challenges. The corresponding increase in areas with very good socioeconomic conditions amounted to 5.2 percentage points at the same time.

On an annual basis, the difference between areas with major socio-economic challenges and areas with very good socio-economic conditions amounted to 4.6 percentage points in 2021. In 2023, it increased to 6.3 percentage points and in 2025 to 8.9 percentage points.

For all area types, the proportion of women in the population who collected systemic estrogens increased from 5.1 percent in 2021 to 6.2 percent in 2023 and 8.4 percent in 2025.

### **Regional statistical areas and area type**

In this fact sheet statistics are presented by area type, which is based on Sweden's 3,363 regional statistical areas (RegSO). A RegSO is a geographically delimited area that follows the county and municipal boundaries and is based on Sweden's population on the last day of December each year, i.e. for all living and registered individuals in Sweden.

The type of area is based on the socio-economic index (SEI), which is the average of three indicators in each RegSO: the proportion with pre-secondary education (20-65 years), the proportion with a low economic standard (regardless of age), and the proportion that receive financial assistance and/or long-term unemployment (20-65 years). A higher SEI value indicates higher socio-economic vulnerability.

Based on the number of standard deviations from the mean, a grouped variable, area type, is created, ranging from high socio-economic challenges to very good socio-economic conditions. The latest relevant year for RegSO and area type is 2025 and 2023 respectively.

### **More information**

You can find more tables, graphs and information here (select Tillhörande dokument och bilagor): [www.socialstyrelsen.se/statistik-och-data/statistik/alla-statistikamnen/lakemedel](http://www.socialstyrelsen.se/statistik-och-data/statistik/alla-statistikamnen/lakemedel) (in Swedish, but with English list of terms).

If you want to use our statistical database:  
[www.socialstyrelsen.se/en/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistical-databases](http://www.socialstyrelsen.se/en/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistical-databases)

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