

TB in Flanders at historic low, but still an enormous challenge worldwide

Flanders never had fewer new cases of tuberculosis, but it remains the most deadly infectious disease worldwide with 1,8 million new cases each year.

23-03-18



Dit is de omschrijving

In the run up to World Tuberculosis Day on 24 March, the preliminary Flemish figures show a new decrease in the number of reported cases of TB in Flanders. [The 338 reports in 2017 are even the lowest number ever](#), according to the Flemish Agency for Care and Health and the Flemish Association for Respiratory Health and Tuberculosis.

On 24 March, 136 years ago, Robert Koch discovered the bacterium that causes TB. World Tuberculosis Day raises awareness about the efforts to end the epidemic. The United Nations want to end TB by 2030.

“In Flanders the control efforts of tuberculosis bear fruit, but particularly in Africa there is still much work left to do. Especially the diagnosis and treatment of resistant forms of TB form an enormous challenge,” said ITM’s Prof. Bouke de Jong.

ITM is a supranational reference laboratory of the World Health Organization (WHO) for multidrug-resistant TB and supports laboratories in the South in that capacity.

Our scientists are involved in a broad range of TB research projects, at the level of the pathogen, the patient and public health. The Institute also hosts [the world’s largest public collection of TB strains](#) for research. A [shorter and better treatment for multidrug-resistant TB](#), developed by ITM researcher Armand Van Deun, was introduced in 2016 by the WHO as standard treatment worldwide.