BELGIUM: CONSEQUENCES OF THE STATE REFORM ON THE PROVISION OF HEALTH DATA

Supporting paper submitted by the Scientific Institute of Public Health, Brussels, Belgium

Background

1. In Belgium, The State Reform was carried out in four stages (in 1970, 1980, 1988 and 1993). The result is that nowadays, Belgium is a federal state, which consists of communities and regions.

2. As a consequence of the State Reform, the competencies of the federal government were redistributed over the different governments.

3. As for Public Health, the competencies were divided between the Federal

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1 Prepared by Nathalie Bossuyt, Research Assistant, Viviane Van Castereb, Project Manager and Herman Van Oyen, Head of the Setion of Epidemiology, Louis Pasteur Department of Epidemiology.
Ministry of Social Affairs, Public Health and the Environment and the Community Governments.

**Present situation**

4. In the past, though various health data were available in Belgium, they were not integrated into a real health information system.

5. Consequently to the redistribution of the competencies for Public Health, the provision of health information also underwent changes. Within both Communities, there is a strong interest in the use of health indicators and health targets. Each community elaborates its own conceptual framework for the provision of health data, but unfortunately not in co-ordination with the other authorities. As a result, for many health indicators there are only data available in one community, and no national data can be provided.

6. A few examples of data providing systems illustrate some problems.

**Conclusion**

7. The conclusion is that the State Reform in Belgium has had a considerable influence on the provision of health information and health statistics. Health policy got new impulses, as the different governments elaborated their own health programmes, according to their specific needs and insights.

8. There is a need for a comprehensive health information system as well as for co-ordination and agreements between all concerned authorities in order to improve the present situation.