



Summary general questions

Belgium

November 13, 2018

Country description

The population in Belgium is estimated at 11.3 million, with 122,000 births each year. The average life expectancy is estimated at 79 for men and 84 for women (2016). The gross national income per capita (PPP int. \$) is 47,561 (2017). The estimated total expenditure on health per capita (Intl \$, 2014) is 4,392 and the total current expenditure on health as percentage of GDP (2014) is 10.6%.

General health and school systems

Almost all children are born in the hospital or maternity clinic. Prematurely born children can be treated from 24 weeks. The average stay in the hospital is 2-3 days, since it has been recently reduced. The birth registration coverage is 100% (mandatory). The infant mortality under the age of 5 per 1000 live births per year is 4.

The primary school starts at age 6, but children can start at age 5.5.

Existing prevention programmes and coverage

General Preventive Child Health Care programmes are regionally organized (Wallonia-Brussels Federation, Flanders and German-speaking community). Each region decides the screening policy that will be implemented. The screening is performed by nurses, midwives, pediatricians, GPs and orthoptists (for visual screening in Wallonia). The care is funded by the regions and government and free of charge for the parents.

The methods of inviting the children and the contact moments differ by region. In Wallonia-Brussels the first contact is in the maternity ward. There is no national estimate of attendance to screening, but the regions do monitor and evaluate at least some of the programmes. Cost-effectiveness studies have been performed for parts of the programme in Wallonia-Brussels.

About 97% of the children are vaccinated. The first vaccinations are given at the age of 2 months.

The total costs of general screening are unknown, but some costs per programme are known. The average salary costs for a nurse or midwife are 27,000 to 48,000 euros per year (13-24 euros per hour).

References

WHO (all accessed August 2018):

- Data on country population and economics: <http://www.who.int/countries/en/>
- Data on birth registrations: <http://apps.who.int/gho/data/view.main.GSWCAH54v>
- Data on vaccinations: <http://apps.who.int/gho/data/view.main.UHCIMMUNIZATIONv>

World Bank (accessed August 2018):

- GDP per capita: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.PP.CD?view=chart>