

# ***The official breast cancer screening programme in Flanders: a catch-22?***

## ***Introductory editorial***

by

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Belgium is a complex country. Its administrative and political structures are very sophisticated. The health care system does not escape this particularity. As a result, the organisation of the breast cancer screening in Flanders is anything but straightforward. In fact, the Belgian/Flemish health care system is not at all screening-friendly. However, people working in the field of (breast) cancer screening in Flanders have always been very motivated and hardworking to get the maximum out of it.

The first years of the Flemish breast cancer screening programme were totally dedicated to the implementation of the programme, whereby a manifold of practical problems had to be solved. Lately, however, the ever present curiosity virus has been cropping up again and some more time could be spent on the evaluation of different parameters of the screening programme to answer the question: 'How are we doing?'

I am very glad to have received contributions from the Universities of Ghent, Leuven and Antwerp and from the Intermutualistic Agency for this special issue of the Archives of Public Health. They are proof of the

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hard work that has already been done but also of the huge amount of work that still has to be performed to make the Flemish breast cancer screening programme better. I also want to thank Joost Weyler for his guest editorial, which sheds some light on some in-depth aspects of the Flemish breast cancer screening programme. More specifically, on the catch-22 of Flemish women who are in force willing to have a mammography performed whilst the official participation rate is still very low compared to other countries.

My sincere hope is that the cooperation between the different breast cancer screening centres and other partners in the field may lead to a continuous evaluation of the Flemish breast cancer screening programme as a whole, with this special issue as a milestone and real starting point.