

Joint Action Health Workforce
Planning and Forecasting

Belgium - Use of Horizon Scanning and Delphi Method as part of a national review of the GP workforce

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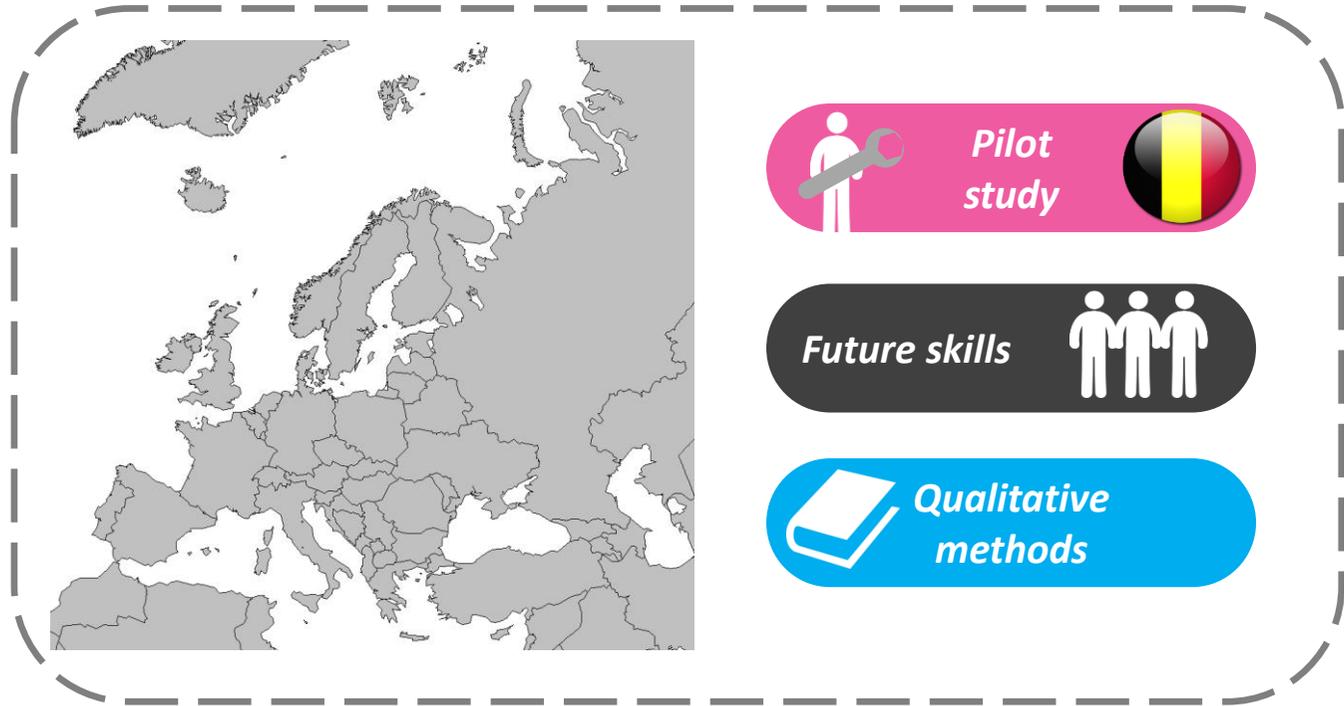


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A pilot study in Belgium

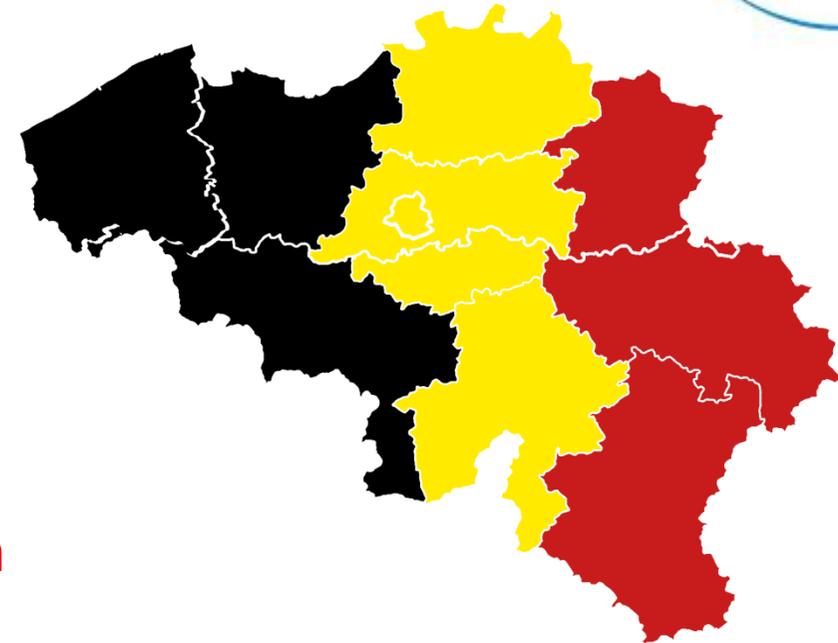


Horizon scanning
and future
orientated
methods in
workforce
planning



Objectives of the pilot study in Belgium

- To test the use of relevant **qualitative** methodologies with a view to **collect data for specific parameters** of the existing quantitative Belgian Health Workforce Planning Model (Horizon scanning & Delphi method).
- The Belgian Ministry of Health hoped to determine if these methodologies can **enrich the current qualitative consultation process** taking place in the framework of the Belgian medical workforce Planning Commission



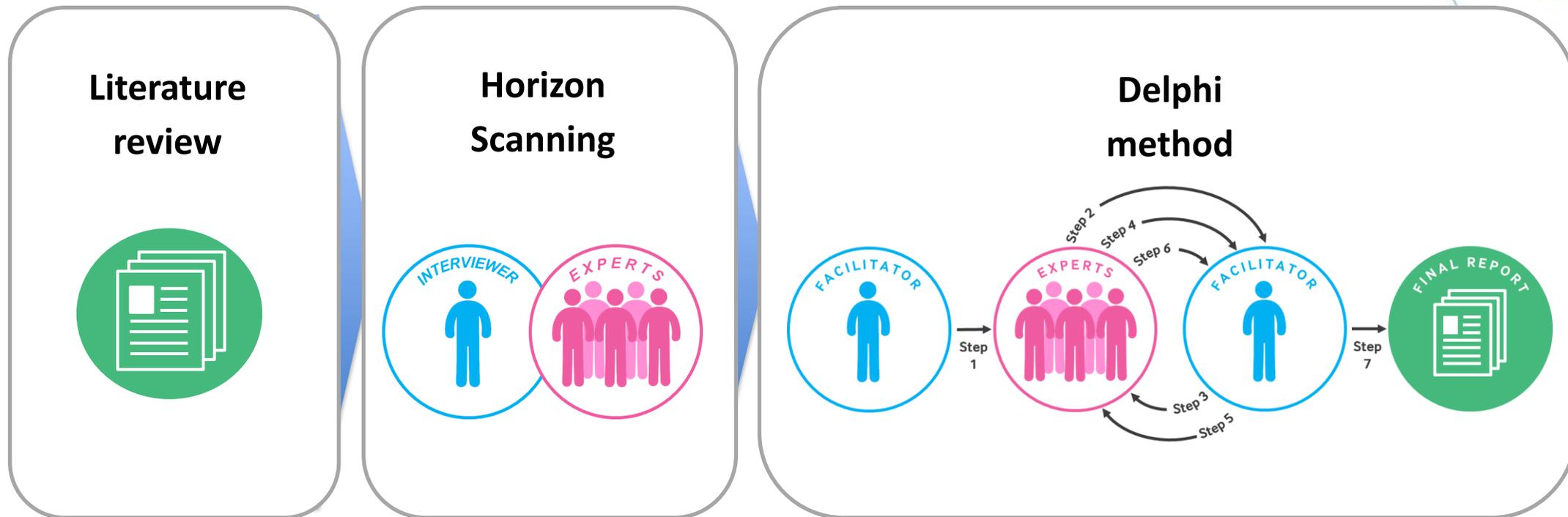
Joint working team

- To deliver the pilot study a joint working team of the following organisations as part of was established:



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Pilot study stages



Outputs: New intelligence and quantified variables for the Belgian workforce model. A pilot study report for the EU Joint Action

Results of the literature review

TRENDS IN PATIENTS' HEALTH CARE NEEDS

Ageing population, increasing number of chronic conditions and multi-morbidity.
Changing health care needs (more informal care, socio-cultural diversity, new technologies)



TRENDS IN HEALTH CARE PROFESSION

Increase in number of graduated GP students
Lower activity rate (feminization, work-life balance)
Large outflow of older male GPs for retirement
Large outflow of young GPs (burn-out)



CHALLENGES

More and more complex health care needs in primary care

Low attractiveness of GP as a health profession

Results of the literature review

----- How to address these challenges -----

Patient empowerment:
Shared-decision making +
Patient activation measures

Interprofessional practices in primary care
(task delegation, improve after-hours care
organisation, cross-disciplinary electronically
shared patient file, less home visits)

Stimulate **self-care**
for minor ailments

Increase number and quality of GP
clerkships and interprofessional
clerkships

-- Supported through the realization of --

RESHAPING THE FINANCING
SYSTEM IN GENERAL PRACTICE

COORDINATION OF POLICIES WITH CLEAR GOAL
(global strategy)= Quality in care



Combination of: lump
sum per patient
+ P4Q
+ fee-for-performance

Financial support to
facilitate GP (location,
task delegation)

Equal wages for
GPs and specialists

Reshape professional
profiles in primary care

Stronger echelons (GP
as gatekeeper)

Quality-driven <-> goal-oriented

QUALITY

Horizon scanning - method

Focal question as used by Belgium for horizon scanning

“Thinking up to the year 2035, what are the key driving forces that will impact the general practitioner workforce in Belgium? (in terms of numbers and requirements)”

- The horizon scanning stage conducted 16 interviews made up of 8 Dutch and 8 French speaking respondents.
- Following the interviews a thematic data analysis was performed using the TEEPSE framework (Technological, Economic, Environmental, Political, Social and Ethical as developed by the CfWI).
- From this analysis 16 key factors were identified of high, medium and low impact.

HORIZON
SCANNING



Horizon scanning – factors identified

High impact factors identified

- A more capitation oriented **payment** for integrated care delivery (Economic)
- Changes to more horizontally integrated services e.g. **out of hours** (Political)
- Introduction of **new professions** and adaptation of the legal framework (Political)
- Task shifting to more multidisciplinary **group practices** (Political)
- Changes in **health care needs** (Social)
- **Decreasing activity rate** in GPs (working hours + numbers) (Social)
- **Task definition** of GPs and other health care providers (Social)

Medium impact factors identified

- Electronic sharing patient information (**E-health**) (Technological)
- Regional variation in GP distribution (Environmental)
- Vertical **integration** the relationship between GP and specialist doctors (Political)
- **Distribution of GP students** between the two language communities - French and Dutch speaking (Political)
- Large **outflow older GPs** (Social)

Delphi method – ‘quantifying qualitative insights’

- Delphi **process** : structured interview of experts, with multiple rounds, after each round participants receive overview of answers and motivations of all participants, leading to converging of opinions
- There were **2 rounds** of Delphi using **excel based templates** as provided by the CfWI / UK / WP6 team. These were adapted for use in Belgium by the pilot study team.
- As a benchmark for the use of the Delphi method as part of workforce planning, this stage exceeded the **minimum of 15 respondents** as recommended for this type of workforce study (CfWI, 2014a).
- Selection within Horizon Scanning results of those factors that can be **quantified and** are present in **modelling tool** used for GP review in Belgium.

Delphi method – questions for the experts

Delphi method questions regarding the GP workforce in Belgium to the French and Dutch language speaking communities

1. What is the expected **change in demand for GP care** in the female / male population between now and 2035?
2. How many hours does a **full time equivalent** of a GP consist of now, and how do you expect this to change in 2035?
3. What is the expected **change in activity rate** for female / male GPs between now and 2035?
4. What is the expected change in **distribution of tasks** for a GP between now and 2035?

Delphi method – type of outputs & use

- This method produced **numerical values** for each question, representing the average view of the consulted experts
- The obtained numerical values will be used in a **workforce future scenario** developed with the Belgian mathematical planning model

Benefits of Qualitative GP review

Added value and applicability of the work

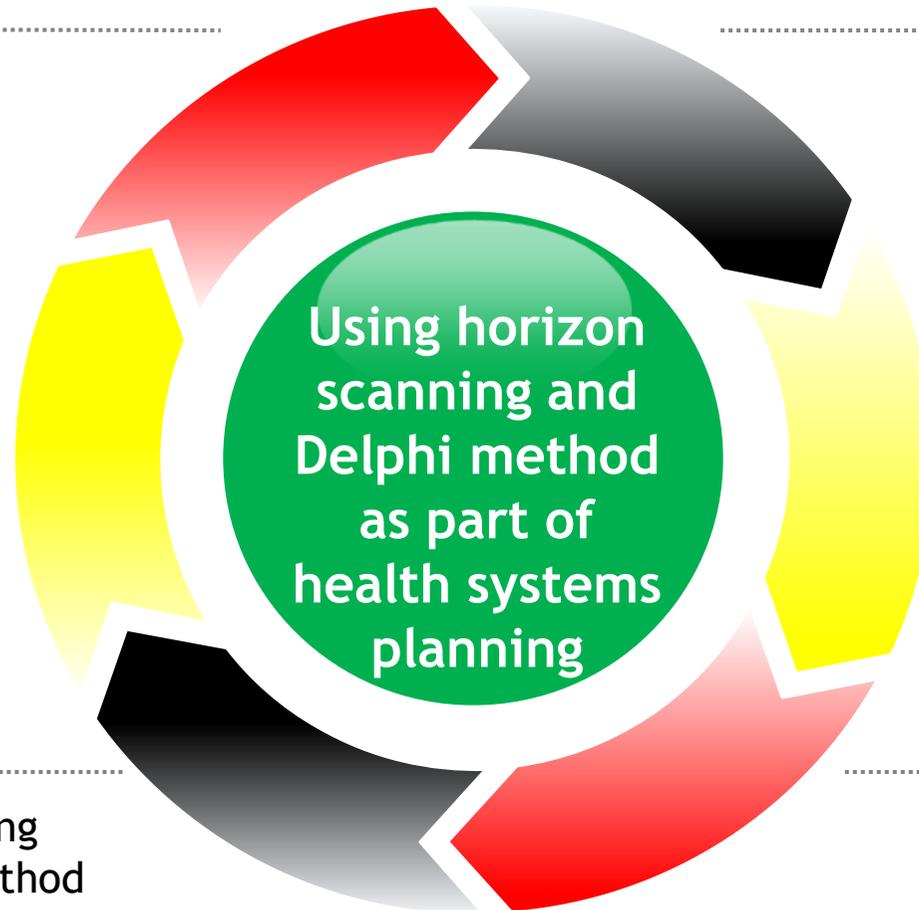
- The **horizon scanning** stage:
 - Has collected, in a systematic and repeatable way for the first time, **a broad range of ideas** about the future and how some of the driving forces may impact the GP workforce.
 - This new information has provided a **deeper level of understanding** of these driving forces and enhanced the robustness of the study.
- Use of the **Delphi method**:
 - has built on horizon scanning further by working with experts to **quantify a range of variables** that can be used with the Belgian workforce planning model. It allowed us to **combine the insights** of a diverse group of experts.
 - These have **improved scenario generation processes**, the model inputs and the outputs that support decision making.

Lessons learnt

Scoping, scheduling and planning

- Due to **time pressures** the horizon scanning and Delphi stage were commenced, planned and designed **without the full analysis results of from each stage**. This created difficulties in ensuring that the conclusions and findings from each stage were fully analysed before the next stage started.
- The agreed **focus of the analysis might have been more clearly defined** at the start of the project especially as there were **disparate and remotely located teams** performing the work.
- The overall **time** estimated for all stages of the work was **underestimated** at the planning stage for the more complex delivery arrangement which created additional **time delays, communication and definition challenges** between the involved partners and stakeholders. Overall the literature review, horizon scanning and Delphi stages took a total of **6 months** which included the delays experienced.

Recommendations for those wishing to use horizon scanning and the Delphi method in the future



6. Ensure the overall **planning, timing and budget** of the work is realistic.

Learn from others who have used these methods as part of workforce reviews.

5. Ensure **stakeholders** are involved in every stage of the workforce review including modelling and variable validation (CfWI, 2015)

4. Ensure that the persons using horizon scanning or Delphi method have or access some **proven experience and expertise** (or access to people that do) in workforce planning.

1. Set **goals and objectives** of the workforce review to be completed. What is the priority? What time frame or depth will the review go to?

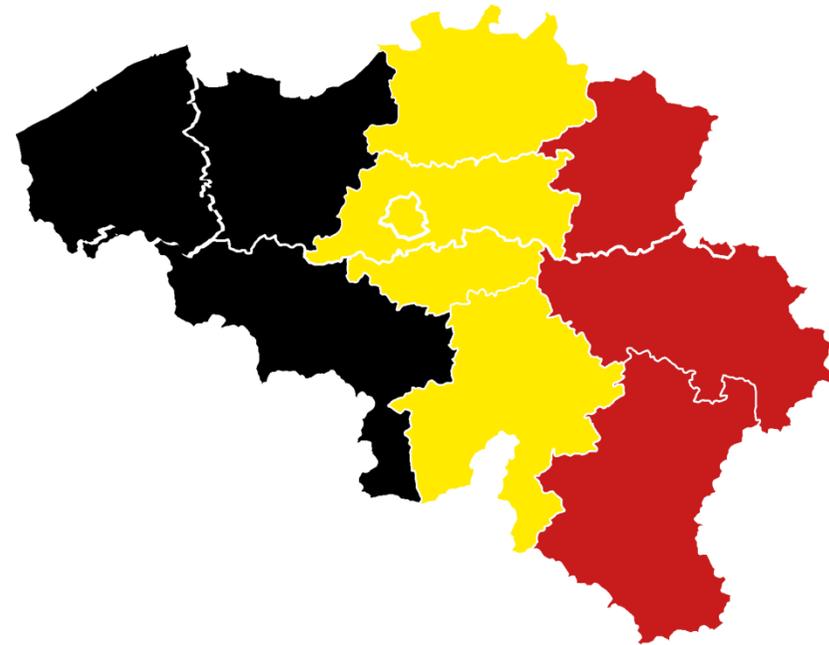
2. **Understand the context** of the system to be investigated ensuring the that appropriate methods are selected for workforce planning (Fellows and Edwards, 2014).

3. **Use the selected techniques as part of an overall approach.** Ensure that horizon scanning and Delphi is strongly linked to all stages.

Summary

- Overall the application of horizon scanning and Delphi method **have added value** to the General Practitioner (GP) review in Belgium and **revealed new areas of information and data.**
- The use of qualitative methods requires **skilled and experienced researchers, sufficient resources and a realistic timeframe**
- Diligent **project management** is essential, especially when working with multiple, geographically distant researchers
- These methods **will be integrated into the overall approach by Belgium for the future** and the **findings will be integrated into the advice and recommendations to ministers** regarding the GP workforce in Belgium.

Thank you!



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