



**ANNEX 2.1 REQUEST LETTER ACCOMPANYING THE QUESTIONNAIRE
CONCERNING THE METHODOLOGICAL ASPECT OF HEALTH INTERVIEW SURVEYS**

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contact

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Onderwerp Update of the 1996 inventory of national Health Interview Surveys
re

Heerlen, 7 September 1999

Dear Sir or Madam,

In 1996 Eurostat made an inventory of national Health Interview Surveys and other national surveys with a significant health component in Europe. Your institute responded to this request, providing information on one or more surveys. The information of this inventory was analysed by Statistics Netherlands and resulted in among other things the report *Coverage of Health Topics by Surveys in the European Union*¹ by the Eurostat Working Group on Public Health Statistics. More recently this Working Group has approved the Eurostat proposal to collect data on twelve topics of the national surveys.

As the inventory was carried out some years ago and survey methods and contents change in the course of the years, the information you provided in 1996 may now be outdated. Statistics Netherlands has therefore taken the initiative to update the inventory.

In co-operation with KTL Finland we have decided to broaden the scope of the inventory by also collecting information on Health Examination Interviews. A joint project has been set up, entitled *Health Surveys in the EU: HIS and HIS/HES evaluations and models*. The project is funded by the European Commission (DG-V) and supported by Eurostat.

The project aims to support Health Monitoring by providing insight in the availability and comparability of health survey data. Statistics Netherlands and KTL Finland intend to develop a computerised database containing information on the methods and contents of health surveys in Europe. This means that the questions used in the surveys will be included in a database. At this stage we do not intend to include any data (figures) in the database. The database will be made available to all institutes responsible for conducting Health Interview/Examination Surveys.

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P.O. Box 4481
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Statistics Netherlands will conduct the inventory of the methods and contents of Health Interview Surveys and KTL Finland will do the inventory of Health Examination Surveys.

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¹ Copies of this report are available on request at Statistics Netherlands.

The present letter concerns mainly Health Interview Surveys. At a later stage of the project, KTL Finland will be seeking more detailed information about Health Examination Surveys through a questionnaire based on their inventory of HES with the aid of Medline and other databases.

To avoid any confusion and duplication of work, we would also like to refer to the EUROHIS project to develop common instruments for health interview surveys in Europe. In collaboration with Statistics Netherlands, WHO/EURO initiated this project in 1987, and since July 1998 it has received the support of the EC/BIOMED2 programme. The information we are requesting with the present letter is also necessary, but not completely sufficient, for the EUROHIS work programme. Therefore, the information will be made available to EUROHIS as well, but in a few weeks time you will receive a request from WHO/EURO, on behalf of the Scientific and Management Board of EUROHIS, for limited additional information needed for the EUROHIS project.

With regard to the project *Health Surveys in the EU* we would be grateful if you could provide us with the following:

1. **Information concerning the methodological aspects of the interview survey(s) of your organisation. Please complete the enclosed list of questions.** If your organisation conducts more than one survey, we have enclosed more than one questionnaire.
2. **The survey questionnaires used for the most recent year the survey was conducted.**
For each questionnaire, we would like to receive:
 - a. A **paper version** in the original language (two copies).
If more than one language was used, please forward them all.
 - b. An **English translation**, if available (two copies).
An English translation is, of course, very important. If this is not possible, a German or French version will suffice.
 - c. **Computer files** of the questionnaires mentioned under a. and b.
It would be convenient for us if you could provide files in MS-Word or Wordperfect 6.1 format, though any other format will do.

Annex 1 contains a list of surveys in your country that we have already included in our study. You can use this list to check which version of the questionnaire we already have at Statistics Netherlands, and whether we have it in a computer file. If no more recent version exists, then you need not forward the questionnaires.

However, even if there is no more recent version of the questionnaires, we do request that you return the list of questions concerning the methodological aspects of the survey.

We would appreciate it if you could return the enclosed list of questions and, if applicable, a more recent version of the survey questionnaires and computer files by 8 October to the address mentioned below. You may send computer files by e-mail if you prefer to do so. If you have any questions you may also use this address.

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Thanking you in advance for your co-operation,
Yours sincerely,

Jaap van den Berg
Projectmanager

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