

**Developing Comparative  
Social Welfare Statistics:  
Issues of Client Information Systems  
and Social Reporting**

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## **Developing Comparative Social Welfare Statistics: Issues of Client Information Systems and Social Reporting**

This report presents the results of an international expert meeting, held in June 1994 in Flanders, Belgium, discussing the possibility and the issues in developing international comparative social welfare statistics. Both policy-makers and academics recognize the need for this form of comparative information. Yet, there are at present no such data available in a comparable format. This is partly due to the different social welfare contexts in different countries. Above all, the lack of standardization across countries in defining social welfare and social welfare data causes a babel situation.

Development of such comparative social welfare statistics involves an assessment of the current shortcomings in both client information systems and social reporting. It also needs to take into account the issue of reliability. Above all, consideration for the rather technical aspects of reliability and validity of data has to be broadened by including their usability. Only when the actual or expected use of data is taken as a starting-point, a useful framework for social welfare statistics can be developed.

This report contains the full text of the introductory paper, outlining the aims and issues concerning the topic. It also contains summary reports and reflections on the presentations by the international experts. In the concluding chapter, the main lessons are summarized as well as possible scenarios for future developments.

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## Table of Contents

	page
<b>Preface</b> <i>Jan Steyaert and Patrick Kenis</i>	7
<b>Developing Comparative Social Welfare Statistics. Its Importance within the Flemish Welfare Policy</b> <i>Luc Silon</i>	9
<b>Developing Comparative Social Welfare Statistics – The Framework</b> <i>Jan Steyaert</i>	13
<b>Developing Comparative Social Welfare Statistics – The Presentations</b> <i>Rami Benbenishty</i>	29
<b>Developing Comparative Social Welfare Statistics – The Conclusions</b>	45
<b>Presentations</b>	49
<b>List of Participants</b>	50
<b>Abstracts: English / French / German</b>	53