

For a challenging doctoral research project, Interface Demography (VUB) and the Stichting Kankerregister are seeking a

## Scientific assistant (F/M/X)

### Project

As a scientific assistant you will work on a FWO-project into differences in **cancer according to migrant origin**. European societies are ageing and an ever-increasing group of older people have a migrant background. Belgium leads in this development, as large-scale immigration took place relatively early in its history. An older population is certainly good news, but raises a number of challenges, as older people often have weaker health and are more vulnerable to some cancers and other diseases. While cancer risks in the older host population have already been adequately mapped, much less is known about the cancer risks of immigrants. Large-scale studies into cancer incidence and mortality that compare the host population to those of migrant origin are relatively rare in Europe. However, it is very important to study these differences because our societies are ageing and because the factors that cause cancer have not yet been fully mapped. The project on which you will work will do this for Belgium. As first generation immigrants exchange their country of origin for another (host) country and thus also for another healthcare environment, they can be considered an 'experimental group'. Consequently, the study of cancer and its mechanisms in the population with a migrant background versus the host population can provide an insight into the mechanisms of that cancer: e.g. with respect to the importance of environmental versus genetic factors in the development of certain cancers. These findings will not only increase our knowledge of cancer and its causes but also have the potential of steering future policy aimed at improving the health of all people in an ageing society.

You will be responsible for the following duties:

Performing the proposed research project:

- Thorough literature study of the subject
- Methodological analysis and statistical analysis
- Clear reporting, accurate and concise synthesis of methods, analyses and results
- Publishing articles in scientific peer-reviewed journals

### Job profile

- You have a master's degree in (Bio)medical Sciences, Paramedical Sciences, Public Health, Applied Science, Social Sciences or Bio-Engineering Sciences with prior knowledge of (bio-) statistics.
- You are a 'passionate researcher' with expertise/interest in quantitative research.
- You have the necessary software skills for managing databases and data analyses (including knowledge of SAS, SPSS, Stata, etc.)
- You have experience/interest in epidemiological research and a passion for the 'social inequality' theme.
- You are prepared to write a doctoral thesis based on the research.
- You have good written and oral communication skills in English and preferably also in Dutch.
- You are able to work in a collegial manner within a research team.

## Job description

*We offer:*

- A full-time appointment as scientific employee for 4 years within the possibility of obtaining a doctorate
- Based on your experience and academic merits, you will receive a salary on one of the pay scales established by the government. Hospitalisation insurance and the free use of public transport for commuting are included as standard. If you would prefer to cycle to work, then there is also some remuneration for that.
- A motivating post in a young and dynamic team with space for contact and initiative
- A strong scientific guidance within a reputed, dynamic and multidisciplinary research team
- Diverse opportunities for further training in connection with this position both at the Stichting Kankerregister and the VUB
- Interesting national and international research contacts

## Details of the environment

The **Vrije Universiteit Brussel** is an internationally oriented university in Brussels, in the heart of Europe. By delivering high-quality research and personalised education, the VUB wants to make an active and committed contribution to a better society. This mission is supported by 7 core values to which all staff commit:

1. Critical, independent thinking and free research
2. Openness, tolerance and respect for person and society
3. Social commitment and sustainability
4. Quality, innovation and creativity in research, education and services
5. Lifelong quality and professional relationship with students, industry and society
6. Individual approach in education and strong student involvement in the management and operation of the university
7. Maximum opportunities for employees to develop and grow

The research group **Interface Demography** is part of the VUB sociology department and has internationally recognised research expertise in research methods, social epidemiology, demographic and population sociological research and employment (market) research.

The **Stichting Kankerregister**, located in the heart of Brussels, is a dynamic organisation responsible for the collection, quality control, processing and analysis of cancer registration data.

For many years the staff of the Stichting Kankerregister have focussed on research activities in the field of descriptive epidemiology (projects that investigate the causes and geographic spread of cancer) and also projects in which quality and care are evaluated. In many cases, research activities take place in collaboration with university and other partners.

## Practically

As a doctoral student you will be affiliated to the Vrije Universiteit Brussel and your promotor is Professor Dr Hadewijch Vandenheede. Given the subject of the proposed research project, you will work under the supervision of Professor Vandenheede and the researchers at the Kankerregister. Physically you will primarily work at the Kankerregister in Brussels (estimate 60% at the Kankerregister in Brussels, 40% at the Interface Demography Department of the VUB).

The anticipated start date for the project is 1 October 2017. The duration / term of the contract is 4 years.

The deadline for **applications** is **5 June 2017**. Applications can be sent electronically by sending your covering letter and CV to [hadewijch.vandenheede@vub.ac.be](mailto:hadewijch.vandenheede@vub.ac.be).

*Any questions about the content?*

Content Prof. Hadewijch Vandenheede by email at [hadewijch.vandenheede@vub.ac.be](mailto:hadewijch.vandenheede@vub.ac.be).