Reviewer’s report

Title: Development of breast cancer mortality, considering the implementation of mammography screening programs - a comparison of western European countries

Version: 1 Date: 02 Apr 2019

Reviewer: Jacques Fracheboud

Reviewer's report:

I appreciate the careful arguing in the authors' reply to the reviewers' comments. I consider the modifications of the manuscript a valuable improvement in reporting on this study and have only a few minor comments yet.

Consider to add in the Abstract Conclusions to add "(accelerated)" - between brackets - before "reduction of breast cancer mortality rates.

Background, L9: consider to replace reference 5 (Moss et al.) by another RCT with focus on the 50-69 age group.

Legend Table 1, 1st sentence: "more or less complete national screening" is still not very clear. The fact that everywhere in the country programme mammography has started (= 100% geographical coverage; e.g. Austria, Belgium, Germany, Italy) does not always mean that the total target population has been invited at least once (= 100% coverage by invitation; e.g. The Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, UK). This problem is tackled by "more or less"; I suggest to replace "national screening" by "national coverage".

In Switzerland, the coverage by invitation was in 2012 37% (Swiss Cancer Screening. Rapport de monitorage 2012. Bern: Swiss Cancer Screening, December 2015; www.swisscancerscreening.ch) and only recently reached more than 50%; it shall probably never reach 100%. I recommend to add a footnote for Switzerland in Table 1.

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Unable to assess

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.
Yes

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