



## **PES to PES Dialogue**

# **The European Commission Mutual Learning Programme for Public Employment Services**

DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

## **PES to PES Peer Review**

# **Blended service delivery for jobseekers**

## **Toolkit**

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## 1. Introduction

PES are increasingly using multi-channel management to meet increased demands, tighter budgets and deliver services to jobseekers in a more effective and efficient way. Digitalisation is listed in the 2020 Strategy Paper as one of eight common key principles necessary for PES to operationalise the Strategy. It states that “investments in user-friendly technology are expected to increase service availability and accessibility, and allow PES “to keep down working costs and increase performance.” In connection with the European Employment Strategy, the PES Working Group Efficiency’s final report in autumn 2013 stressed that the potential of ICT should be further exploited – as an enabler which can be deployed in multiple processes, including back-office functions as well.

At a recent Peer Review in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, participants from the host (UUV) and 13 Peer Countries<sup>1</sup> discussed recent developments in blended service delivery strategies and their implementations in national PES. The goal of this event was – in line with the recent Decision on cooperation between Public Employment Services – to share best practices and promote innovative solutions for the delivery of PES services. The high demand from PES to attend this Peer Review demonstrated the growing interest in the subject, and their wish to learn from others good practices when developing digitalised services.

The event was a follow-up to the peer review conducted in Antwerp (Belgium VDAB) in 2011, which focused on multi-channel management. The Peer Review built on findings from a dedicated **Analytical Paper** and **Peer Review**. Digitalisation of services has also been discussed in a **PES to PES Dialogue Report 2012**, and multi-channel management was discussed in detail in an **Annual thematic report**.

### Box 1: The discussions were guided by four questions

1. To what extent can jobseekers be served online (via self-help and interactive tools) and what are the key considerations for PES?
2. What are innovative developments in digitalisation and blended service delivery (and what are implications for the role of face-to-face counselling /monitoring)?
3. How do PES measure the performance of different channels and blended service delivery?
4. How do PES manage the changes on resources and staff in the context of increased digitalisation of services?

The Toolkit reports on discussions and practices identified at the Peer Review under each of the above four guiding questions. It contains a couple of “Tips & Tricks”, which are examples of practices (tools) that have proved to be successful, and which are deemed relatively easy to implement. Furthermore, an Appendix contains a more detailed description of six good practices which were considered the most interesting by the participating PES.

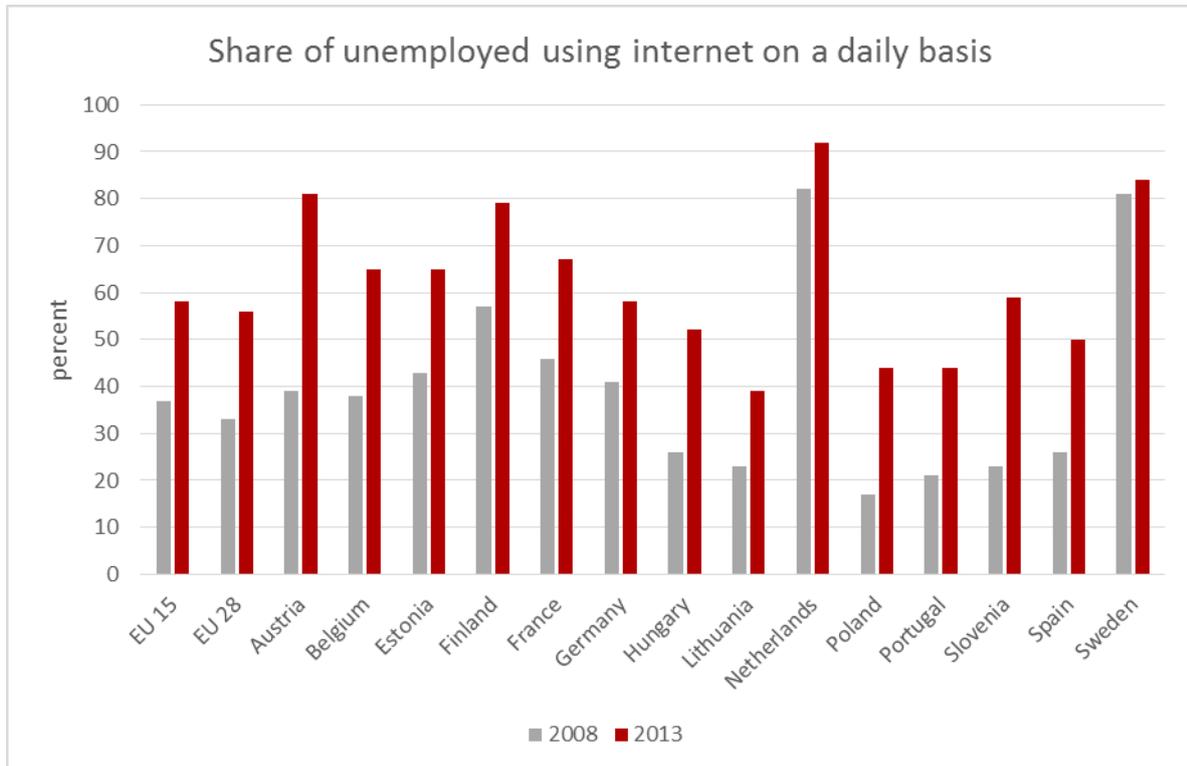
<sup>1</sup> These were: Austria, Belgium (VDAB), Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden.

## 2. Context, background

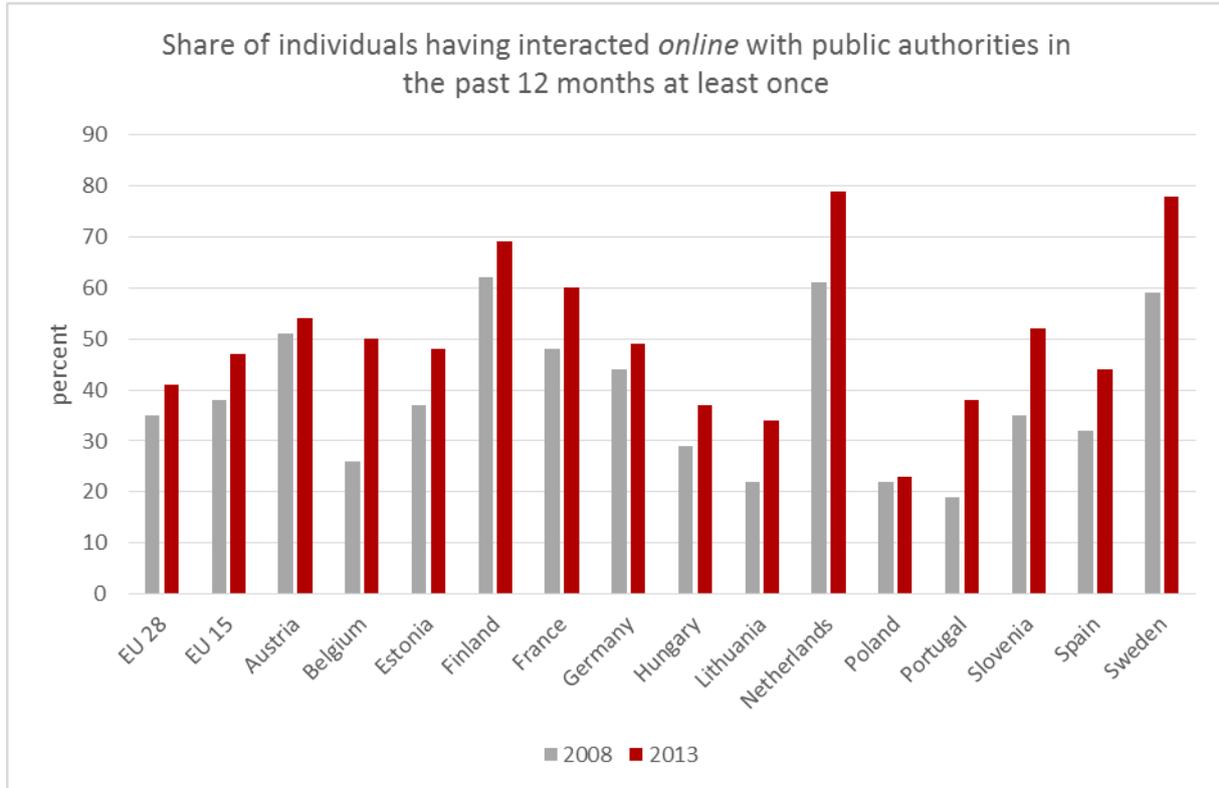
There is an increasing interest in blended service delivery and multi-channelling on the part of PES. This is due both to the changing pool of clients served and the shifts in PES priorities.

Many EU countries continue to face a high unemployment rate in the aftermath of the recent economic and financial crisis, and the composition of the non-employed population is becoming increasingly varied. There is a rapid increase in the number of PES clients with significant digital skills, which is due to both a large pool of young non-employed who have grown up in a world of new technologies, and the fact that modern service delivery has become IT dependent. Eurostat data shows that in 2013 more than half of unemployed persons in the EU use the internet every day (see *Figure 1*). As not only business services, but also public services are increasingly available online (see *Figure 2*), this puts pressure on PES to adapt to their clients' expectations and offer similar services. At the same time, there are a number of clients further removed from the labour market and potentially lacking access to and skills for internet usage (long-term unemployed, health impaired and older individuals), which requires PES to maintain face-to-face service delivery.

**Figure 1: Share of unemployed using internet on a daily basis**



**Figure 2: Share of individuals having interacted online with public authorities in the past 12 months at least once**



There have been a several changes in PES operations in recent years, all of which have led to a growing need for online and blended services. Firstly, high unemployment rates in the aftermath of the economic crisis have implied consistently high caseloads for PES staff. This phenomenon, coupled with a drive for increasing efficiency, has created a push for reductions in administration costs and the introduction of online self-services. Secondly, PES must offer customised and inclusive services, including those required to meet the needs of their most vulnerable clients, who need more intensive and often expensive support. This has further increased the pressure to offer online self-service to those capable of using this. Thirdly, technological advances have made it possible to make use of an increasing amount of data enabling the development of more personalised and sophisticated digital services.

### 3. Blended service delivery and multi-channel management: overview of strategies

One of the central issues of the Peer Review was how to blend service channels (online, face-to-face and telephone) in order to increase PES' effectiveness in service delivery. While PES can learn from others' best practices and innovative solutions for blended service delivery, the extent to which this knowledge is transferable is highly dependent upon countries' multi-channel strategy. There is some convergence across PES strategies with an increase in the role of online services, but it is worth briefly providing an overview of these strategies – based on the Comparative Paper – to put new developments and their usage into context.<sup>2</sup>

There are only a few PES (the Netherlands and Lithuania) which have taken the decision to use the online channel as their main service delivery option, and which relegate other channels to support (to guide clients towards, and help them, with the use of online services) and backup roles (to provide services to those with insufficient skills or motivation for online self-service). A handful of other PES (Austria, Belgium VDAB and Sweden) have built a strategy where different channels supplement each other, and the use of online services is encouraged. In these PES, deliberate decisions are made about what channel is best suited for which services; their strategy is based on complementarities between channels and job-seekers are referred to the right channel at the right time for specific functions.

The strategy of Arbetsförmedlingen (Sweden) provides an interesting example of mixing alternative channels. The initial profiling and drawing up of individual action plans takes place at local employment offices during face-to-face meetings with caseworkers. Job-ready customers are expected to primarily use online self-services, with personalised support by caseworkers both over the telephone and in the form of online face-to-face meetings. These jobseekers are referred for face-to-face meetings with caseworkers at the employment office only to update their individual action plans and for further counselling if they have not returned to employment within four months. However, for customers further away from the labour market, most services are offered face-to-face.

The large majority of PES have made the choice to keep all channels open for a number of services while steering clients towards online service. This effectively means that it is up to the client to decide which delivery channel they prefer.

In 2011, the most common types of services being offered were heavily data driven, such as initial registration, CV preparation, job matching, searching the vacancy database or scheduling meetings. This Peer Review signals a definite rise in both interest and actual expansion of online services, especially in Southern and Eastern Europe.

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<sup>2</sup> It is important to note that the delineation of channels is becoming more fluid with the advent of new technologies (VoIP, smartphones etc.), the increasing integration of channel, and with differences between generations in the perceptions of channels.

## 4. To what extent can clients be served online? New developments, key considerations and limitations

Over the last few years, PES have been actively broadening the scope (and depth) of services that are offered online to clients, and as a consequence have witnessed an increase in the use of online services. These changes have been threefold:

- First, an increasing number of PES have made it possible for their clients to undertake some basic activities online.
- Second, more of PES interaction with clients is now pursued online with the introduction of a larger array of services.
- Third, through more nuanced personalisation of online services, PES are able to convince clients of the benefits of using digital channels.

### 4.1 New developments in online service delivery

Digitalisation seems to be spreading fast, especially in data driven services that require the transmission of information in a structured format where there is no need for real time interaction between the client and PES staff (see bottom right corner of Table 1. below). Such **procedures**, initial registration, preparing a CV, searching the vacancy database, job matching, scheduling meetings or posting job vacancies (for employers) are offered online in all participating countries. In this respect it is remarkable that PES from Eastern and Southern Europe have introduced and/or improved these simple online services in the last four years (e.g. Estonia, Poland and Portugal). Registration still needs to be finalised at a face to face meeting in some of these PES, while Estonia is already using an e-signature. Furthermore, in several countries, where the legal regulations permit this, the application procedure to unemployment benefits is also offered online.<sup>3</sup>

Tips and Tricks: One of the key requirements for digitalised (automated) matching is to attract a large share of job vacancies to be registered at PES. One way to achieve this is to simplify job vacancy registration for employers so that the information they need to enter is limited to what they would otherwise include in a job advertisement (as reported by the Polish PES). User friendly features facilitating the upload of several vacancies in a similar job or recurring vacancies of the same type can also motivate employers to use this PES service.

Most PES agree that services involving intensive and **personalised interaction** between clients and PES staff can be delivered more effectively via synchronous communication (involving both parties at the same time) channels with little restriction on the content (see top left corner of Table 2 below). The typical example is counselling, which has remained mainly face to face in most PES. However, PES are increasingly turning to alternative forms of communication that also ensure synchronous and open interaction, such as on-line chatting or social media platforms.

<sup>3</sup> An important recent example of this is the self-service portal of EUJIF (Estonia). Since public and private databases (through the so-called X-Road) can be connected to the PES files, and so verification of labour market information (including employment and earnings histories) is straightforward, the EUJIF can process benefit claims very quickly.

**Table 1. Main features of traditional and on-line communication channels used by PES**

	<b>Synchronous (same time)</b>	<b>Asynchronous</b>
<b>Open</b>	Face to face (individual or group counselling, job fairs)  telephone, call centre  e-coaching, social media, e-community, chat, video-call	email, printed mail, printed job advertisements
<b>Structured</b>	Webinar	printed forms and questionnaires  static video, mobile application, on-line forms and questionnaires, on line job search facility

There is a clear trend among PES in experimenting with moving some of the basic control and **counselling functions** of caseworkers online for services where the information content can be structured. In other words, the preparation and follow-up of individual action plans and reporting of job applications are now possible online as jobseekers can set up an e-account where their activities are recorded. Building on this, the caseworker (the e-coach) can offer advice to her clients on several issues (job-search strategies, online self-assessment tools). While these practices were already in place in 2011 in a handful of PES (VDAB of Belgium, Estonia, the Netherlands and Sweden), since then a number of other countries (for example France and Slovenia) have piloted the use of these building on the good practices of other PES.

A new development among PES is that a number of services in relation to **skills development and training** needs are also made available online, however the services offered are quite varied. One approach is to provide online skill self-assessment and skill development tools and suggestions for training courses based on these assessments (for example, the E-Guidance Portal in Portugal). A second approach is for the PES to develop online skill enhancement videos and online seminars for their clients (exemplified by the Netherlands). Finally, a many PES use online tools that facilitate jobseekers finding and registering for training courses offered by external providers (a recent example is the self-service portal of the Estonian PES).

## 4.2 The advantages of online service delivery

It is clear from the shared experience of PES that moving services online has numerous advantages.

- By automating the administrative tasks of caseworkers, significant time can be freed up that can be devoted to customers most in need of guidance.
- The online services generate much valuable data/information – of increased accuracy, facilitated by built-in corrections and error-messages –to enable caseworkers to manage their time more efficiently and provide input for their face-to-face interactions with clients.
- Online provision leads to standardisation of some aspects of delivery, which may improve service quality.
- Online tools give considerable freedom to jobseekers wishing to access PES services. For example, online courses can be followed at any time suitable for the jobseeker, at the pace of her own choice.

- Online self-assessment tools can be a vehicle for building self-reliance, and enhancing self-management, which ultimately can lead to not only a higher job-finding rate for jobseekers, but also to a prevention of job-loss.<sup>4</sup>

### 4.3 Considerations and limitations

The discussion at the Peer Review also revealed a number issues and limitations of moving services for jobseekers online.

- Digitalisation will not necessarily increase efficiency if the original non-digital process was poorly designed, hence a review of service quality needs to be undertaken prior to taking a service online.
- To minimise the need for caseworker intervention in job search and matching very specific descriptions of jobs and skills requirements and are necessary such that automated matching can operate effectively.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, job matching need not be based on the past (CVs) and job titles, but can also be based upon skills assessment (for a successful implementation of this approach by VDAB of Belgium, please see the Appendix).
- How to decide upon for which clients online services are the most suitable? While most PES rely on jobseekers' voluntary participation, few use early assessment and steering, and only UWV (the Netherlands) uses formal statistical profiling (Please see the Appendix for a more complete description of the "Work Profiler").
- Are any counselling type activities that go beyond the simplest coaching worth offering online? For the moment, there is little evaluation of this issue, but most PES agree that face-to-face meetings are needed for motivational purposes and for groups further away from the labour market.
- Can activities that require control, verification and possibly sanctions be moved online and be automated? To begin with, most countries' legal regulation does not allow for the connection of private and public sector databases and data transfer hence PES need to rely on jobseekers self-reporting their activities. To continue, in some cases it is important to consider special circumstances (such as accidents or other life events that legitimately constrain the client's actions) rather than automatically apply sanctions.

Tips and Tricks: Research has shown that personality traits are important determinants of jobseekers' labour market entry. Integrating a self-profiling tool into the online registration procedure, and including a handful of (scientifically tested) questions on the jobseekers' psychological profile can be an effective way to find those clients in need of intensive activation and counselling as early as possible (for more detail see the Dutch example in the Appendix). An important challenge in developing such tools is how to avoid user bias in responding to questions.

Finally, personalisation of online services for jobseekers is crucial for enhancing effectiveness as well as progressing customer satisfaction. To guide customers through their journey in PES online systems, links to specific advice, "how to" videos at problem points, and interactive applications that provide information on PES services have proved to be useful. An area where PES have started experimenting is how to adjust the language of online services in order to tailor it to individuals with different levels of skills,

<sup>4</sup> This latter idea is exemplified by the novel "Personal Development Plan" currently piloted by Belgium's-VDAB, which seeks to underline the notion of continuous self-development among all active persons. See the Appendix for more details.

<sup>5</sup> UWV (the Netherlands) currently operates the most detailed automatic job matching system for more than 3000 different job titles.

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to alternative age groups or to jobseekers who are not confident users of the given country's official language (for example, in Austria and Sweden).

Tips and Tricks: To encourage the use of online services for all client groups, translating information on some simple procedures, such as online registration into a number of languages can prove a useful way of overcoming potential exclusion from services. For example, the PES in Sweden offers this type of content on its website in more than 20 languages.

## 5. Innovations in blended service delivery

Over recent years, besides extending digitalisation to new service areas, three innovation frontiers have emerged, including new ways of blending various channels, exploiting the rich data generated by online service users, and the use of new devices.

### 5.1 Innovations in blending service channels

Innovative blended services are mostly being deployed in support situations. The most prominent of these is the development of software and organisational solutions to provide guidance to customers with their online activities. The use of software enabling caseworkers to interact with clients via **chatboxes**, has recently been combined **with co-browsing** in Sweden (please see the Appendix for a more complete description of this tool), which has proven to be a cost effective way of providing personalised and customised support. One of the main issues of online service delivery is how to ensure timely support. Co-browsing seems to be an efficient way of ensuring this, as the PES can serve three times as many clients than when using telephone-based support.

Another innovation in service blending is the introduction of **webinars**, which has been pioneered by UWV (the Netherlands). The crucial feature of this new service is that it enhances peer learning and peer motivation by allowing for interaction not only between the “lecturer” and the customers, but also among **customers** through chatboxes. The in-house development of these webinars by PES might enhance their effectiveness through more direct control over quality and ensuring that features and material are more up to date than those offered in face-to-face training courses delivered by external providers. Furthermore, this service has several advantages over more traditional face-to-face delivery of workshops in terms of cost efficiency, by being able to reach a larger group of clients at a given time, and by saving clients’ travel time.

Tips and Tricks: Webinars can be produced by external experts as well if PES do not have the technical facilities for running them and do not necessarily require extensive training of PES staff as they can be effective even if used separately from the counselling process.

**Cost effectiveness** is also one of the main advantages of a new blended way of matching supply and demand. An example is the organisation of **online screening interviews** between employers and job applicants recently developed in Sweden. This novel service is not only useful for cutting travel time, but also in ensuring that potentially harder to place jobseekers might have an initial chance at securing a further job interview. By cutting the fixed costs of screening, employers are willing to consider a wider set of jobseekers, and disadvantaged jobseekers have less of a barrier to attend the screening meeting.

### 5.2 Innovations in exploiting rich data

Online service provision generates a large amount of data which, if summarised in useful ways, can serve to enhance the quality of both face-to-face and online channels.

One of the basic ways in which data summary extracted from personal e-accounts can assist caseworkers is by providing readily accessible data on whether jobseekers have met their obligations. This allows caseworkers to process cases faster and focus their attention on jobseekers who have fallen behind on their duties.

Tips and Tricks: Dashboards for caseworkers summarise information on jobseekers job search activities and other obligations, which are recorded in their online folder to their counsellor.

Dashboards are efficient way of gathering information to screen clients with difficulties, help plan on future workload for caseworkers, frees up staff time (automated structuring of important information that otherwise caseworkers would have to do themselves), helps improve service quality (ie. less dependent on staff analytical skills).

The requirement for the usage of such tool is simple: the existence of an e-folder where all activities and obligations are recorded.

Analyses building on data mining of jobseekers' CVs and job search profiles can substantially increase caseworkers' contribution to improving jobseekers' chances of finding employment. By providing information on job competition to caseworkers, they can steer jobseekers towards ways of presenting their more marketable skills during job applications.<sup>6</sup>

Tips and Tricks: CV quality cards developed by UWV (the Netherlands) extract information on the search strategies and potential job matches of jobseekers with similar skills profiles. This is presented to jobseekers such that they see in a transparent way (a) how skills are mapped to applications to specific types of jobs and (b) the supply and demand of different jobs. During face-to-face interviews, caseworkers advise jobseekers how they can improve on their CVs by revising the job titles searched and eventually their job finding probability. Experimental evidence from a pilot has shown that the introduction of "CV quality cards" have benefitted jobseekers with initially the weakest resumes the most.

This tool is particularly effective if a substantial part jobseekers use personal e-folders containing CVs and job search profiles, and that a large part job offers are channelled to PES automatic matching tools.

A handful of PES monitor their customers' journey through their digital services (Belgium's-VDAB, for example). Identifying points where customers spend substantial time conveys precise information on what aspects of digitalised services need to be streamlined or re-thought, which can be fed back to the software development process. Some PES (Austria, Estonia, Finland and the Netherlands) also use eyeball-tracking, which is a way to monitor user activity on new webpages to see the way people use the pages, in order to better shape how to design webpages for online services.

### **5.3 Innovations in the use of new devices**

The availability of smartphones for a number of jobseekers has led to the development of various applications that provide timely information. For example, such applications can be used for reminders on jobseekers obligations and meetings to encourage jobseekers' engagement. The results of sophisticated job matching algorithms have also been transplanted to mobile applications so that the jobseeker can be informed about suitable job vacancies in the area as she is walking down the street (ex.: Belgium's-VDAB, the Netherlands, Sweden).

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<sup>6</sup> Please see the Appendix for a more complete description of the "CV Quality Card" implemented by UWV (the Netherlands).

## 6. How to measure performance in different channels?

PES across the EU have a tradition of performance measurement in various ways. However their performance measurement systems exhibit different levels of maturity. The introduction of blended service delivery is also posing new challenges in this respect. While digitalisation offers a multitude of possibilities for data collection, few PES have started to exploit these. Effectiveness in relation to online services is seldom measured, and LM entry continues to dominate as the key stand-alone indicator.

All PES define their ultimate objective in a similar way, to help jobseekers find employment as fast as possible, hence their goal is to find what services and what channels of delivery work the best for each target group. In other words, evaluations ought to distinguish between the relative efficiency of PES' tools. However, most PES use voluntary participation in online service, so in the absence of randomised control trials (or other similar techniques), which are very seldom used to date, it is difficult to provide evidence to assess this. As an alternative to randomised control trials some PES estimated the performance of new services through piloting these at randomly chosen local offices. (See the approach to evaluating the e-coaching services to young graduates in Belgium's-VDAB in the Appendix).

Most participating PES evaluate the success of their new online service delivery through regularly measuring customer usage rates. The rationale for this is that online services consume much less PES staff time than face-to-face channels, so more time can be devoted to intensive counselling, which has been proven to be an efficient way of increasing jobseekers' re-employment rate. Should this be the case, it can be conjectured that the increased usage of online channels could lead to a general rise in effectiveness.

The second outcome measure most used by PES is consumer satisfaction, or in other words the perception of service accessibility and quality, which is based on regular customer surveys. Some PES monitor these continuously (monthly) through post-service customer insight surveys (for example Finland) and use these to dispense with ineffective processes. Most PES try to simultaneously consider customer satisfaction with the effectiveness of their services in order to decide which of these to expand (or to cut back, as was the case for e-counselling in Austria – please see the Appendix for details). Efficiency is explicitly considered by two PES with long-standing experience in online service delivery. In Sweden, the case efficiency of alternative channels – in other words, the number of customers a caseworker is able to serve in a given amount of time - is measured; while the cost efficiency – the amount of savings in unemployment benefits due to an outflow into employment relative the costs of the service - of channels is considered in the Netherlands. In both these countries a specific effort is made to determine the relative efficiency of alternative service delivery methods through use of statistical analysis, as well as by the use of randomised trials in the Netherlands.

Tips and Tricks: Experimental evaluation now often seems to be the “gold standard” in estimating the effect of alternative services for jobseekers. To address concerns about ethical issues, when examining new online (blended) services, a two-stage procedure can be used. First, online services can be offered to a randomly selected group of jobseekers; and second, among those who have accepted to use the online service, the actual delivery channel can be randomised. In this way both the “effect” of the offer of online services and the efficiency of the service for those who choose the channel can be estimated, while the propensity to use the online channel can also be analysed.

However, irrespective of the outcome measures applied or the sophistication of evaluation methods, there is a general problem with performance measurement in blended service delivery. This is due to the difficulty of disentangling the contribution of alternative channels when different sub-components form a “package”. In other words, outcomes (customer satisfaction) would have to be measured for each component and

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various service delivery modes. This clearly is a daunting task that has not been fully addressed so far.

## 7. Managing changes in staff allocation and training provision

It is clear that extending blended and online service delivery has implications for a number of change management areas:

- ensuring PES staff buy-in
- staff allocation
- staff training in response to changes in roles and responsibilities

It is important to note that major PES staff downsizing initiatives were not the prime driver for these programmes (with the exception of the Netherlands), even though shifting administrative tasks to online self-services is intended to free up staff time in most (if not all) cases.

### 7.1 Management and ensuring staff buy-in

It has emerged from the discussions at the Peer Review that PES staff need to share the same vision for the role and advantages of online and blended service delivery. Furthermore, willingness to continuously adapt to the changes brought about by the development of online channels is also key to the success of the new service delivery strategies. In order to ensure this, it is important that all levels of management understand the objectives of the shift toward blended service delivery and how these services work. At the level of senior management, such knowledge is essential to understand the strategic implications of digitalisation, while middle management needs to understand this when cascading change messages to staff.

Furthermore, management ought to be ready to communicate the objectives of digitalisation to PES staff. One of the essential messages which needs to be conveyed is the advantage of blended service delivery from the customers' perspective. This helps staff to be both engaged in the success of the new service delivery models, and to communicate more efficiently in order to direct more customers to online channels where these are available.

Two good practices of managing change in PES have emerged. Firstly, participatory consultation with frontline staff by senior and middle management – as exemplified by Sweden where regular online consultation is organised – can ensure a smooth transition to blended service delivery. In this way, through early and clear communications and staff engagement in the future service delivery vision, their initial concerns can be alleviated. For example at UWV (the Netherlands), “Peek into the Future” workshops are used to communicate to staff the implications of digitalisation in an interactive way.

Secondly, the use of initial piloting of blended service delivery by offices with the most motivated management and staff, and involving these dedicated individuals to communicate the advantages of new services to their peers, has been successful in securing staff buy-in at several PES (for example Slovenia and France).

Tips and Tricks: Ensuring that participation among PES staff in the initial (pilot) phase of new services is voluntary can be key for a successful nation-wide roll-out. This method has proven to attract selected staff members to adopt the new (online) services. With relevant training, these individuals can then more convince some of their change - resistant colleagues.

## 7.2 Staff allocation and tasks

Online service delivery has several important implications for staff allocation. The most obvious of these is the need for a strong IT development and monitoring team. A second, more subtle point is whether blended service delivery implies greater specialisation of staff in front-office and back-office tasks. Most PES have not initiated such a change and have rather moved to making the roles of caseworkers more complex, so that that they need to be able to interact with customers both online and face-to-face.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, the allocation of most caseworkers' time has shifted considerably from administrative and job-matching tasks to counselling.

## 7.3 Ensuring staff training

Blended service delivery entails a shift in skill requirements for PES staff in several dimensions; greater emphasis is placed on:

- ICT skills
- written communication and documentation of activities
- in-depth counselling

As blended service delivery implies a less clear separation of caseworkers' tasks in most PES all staff need to be trained to an extent in the above tasks, , which might be costly.<sup>8</sup> An additional high-cost element of training staff for changes to e-products is in building test environments and demos.

Two types of solutions for providing training to all staff have emerged. The first model is to require staff members to regularly participate in e-learning courses about online services (ex.: Sweden and Finland, the latter using their own staff to create on-line videos on new IT features). The second model is cascaded training: local support personnel at each PES office receive intensive face-to-face training about new online services from the development team, and in a further step these designated persons train and coach all staff at their local office in the use of these services (ex.: Germany, the Netherlands and Estonia). It should be noted that these methods do not need to be seen as alternatives, and a number of PES use both simultaneously (for example: Finland, the Netherlands). In most PES, the large majority of training courses are developed and provided in-house due to (a) cost considerations, (b) legal issues – software is developed by PES, and (c) lack of knowledge on the part of external providers about PES processes.

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<sup>7</sup> UWV (the Netherlands) has reported that the move towards more online service provision has entailed specialisation. One group of caseworkers is involved in working with clients who are able to use online services, while another provides counselling to those clients who are unable to use online services.

<sup>8</sup> It is important to note that training needs to be provided to sub-contractors who deliver counselling services, an example of this is BE-VDAB.

## **8. Challenges and the way forward**

The Peer Review has demonstrated that PES have made considerable progress in the online delivery of their services, and that they are now successfully implementing online self-service variants of data-driven services that used to take up a significant portion of PES staff time. PES are also working out innovative ways of guiding their clients through their online services and seamlessly blending online, face-to-face and telephone channels. These advances have led not only to PES' being able to provide their basic services (registration, job matching) to an increasing number of clients, but also to a customisation of services, with more staff time being devoted to the intensive counselling of clients with lower chances of re-employment.

Despite the spreading of digitalisation, there remain some concerns and difficulties over data protection, authentication of personal identities, interoperability with other public databases (to support the verification of data input by clients), and the rigidity of automated processes that may not always allow for the complexity of individual cases. As a result, the monitoring and activation elements of PES roles are still delivered face-to-face in the large majority of PES.

The potential exclusion from services due to lack of access to the internet, electronic devices, specific software, or due to specific client characteristics that inhibit the use of on-line services also requires attention. In order to deal with this issue, it would be fruitful for PES to make more attempts to delineate which service channels are best suited for specific groups of clients.

Going forward, more efforts are needed cooperating with government actors to remove external barriers for better data-sharing and –usage, sharing tools (software) across PES, incentivising jobseekers to move online and engaging staff in more regular, innovative training methods that reflect how services are delivered and evolving.

A crucial, though relatively less addressed, issue is how to define and monitor performance across alternative channels of service delivery. While large amounts of data generated in the process of digitalisation are used to improve client experience with online services, it has seldom served as a tool to measure the relative effectiveness of different channels. It is essential that future developments of blended services go hand-in-hand with ex-post evaluation of pilots and randomised control-type trials.

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## **Appendix: good practices from participating PES**

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## Austria, AMS – Online Counselling (terminated)

Online Counselling
<b>Description</b> <p>The principle of Online Counselling was to introduce no face-to-face contact for a certain amount of time (up to 6-8 months).</p> <p>This meant that clients with an e-AMS account who have a high self-help potential in finding a new job did not have to come into the office personally over this period of time. All matters could be handled online. Counsellors had to hold online-contact regularly and had to send job vacancies online.</p> <p>The overall aim was to reduce face-to-face contact.</p>
<b>Context</b>
<b>Drivers</b> <p>With the introduction of the e-AMS account the idea of online-counselling arose.</p> <p>A pilot was undertaken in two Federal States of Austria (Upper Austria and Salzburg). The pilot showed success in customers' satisfaction and a reduction in the duration of unemployment.</p> <p>The decision was therefore made to implement online-counselling more generally and to establish technical support for counsellors. This was in 2011.</p>
<b>Design / Development</b> <p>The requirements for AMS counsellors were designed in-house. Certain criteria were needed for statistical evaluation, for instance an indicator for clients who were only serviced online.</p> <p>In addition, a new calendar item/system was required to highlight / separate this target group in diaries. This means that, although there was no face-to-face contact, time still needed to be set aside for "counselling", answering questions or working on papers received/sent. Rules were set up to dictate intervals in which online-counselling would have to be done (e.g. sending new job offers out every week).</p> <p>The effects of this service approach were measured through data warehouse analysis (by using "twin" groups: clients with nearly the same background/history/profession/age, with and without online-counselling, were compared). Information was collected during the time of piloting between February and July 2011.</p> <p>Data warehouse analysis took place after implementation: the period of unemployment, the number of job offers and customer satisfaction were measured. In addition, an external firm launched an inquiry into online-counselled individuals on their satisfaction with the service in comparison to face-to-face counselling (as far as they knew both). Results showed...Covered in points below</p>
<b>Specifics</b>
<b>How it works</b> <p>The counsellor decides which clients do not need face-to-face contact regularly and therefore could be serviced only by online-counselling. This is done as soon as possible – at first contact. The counsellor ticks the client's portfolio "online-served" and gives the client the access to his/her e-AMS account. The frame conditions (like contact intervals...) are explained to the customer and the counsellor diarises the times where he/she has to check on clients' activities.</p> <p>Any exchange from then on takes place online, via e-mail and the eAMS-account exclusively.</p>

## Implementation

The online-counselling was implemented after the piloting phase (of half a year) in the summer of 2011. Due to reasons set out below, the service approach was cancelled in the summer of 2012.

Reasons for cancelling were manifold:

- The difference between using the eAMS-account and receiving online-counselling was not clear to the clients nor to the counsellors.
- The success rates (i.e. measured in unemployment period and number of job offers) were lower for customers who were served online relative to those receiving face-to-face support.
- The eradication of administrative items (sent documents, questions ...) took a lot of time, and time savings that could have been re-directed to other activities were not realised.
- Counsellors had difficulties writing long explanations when responding to customers' requests. Counsellors are used and trained for face-to-face communication; writing skills are not necessarily as developed as oral communication skills. Therefore, extra trainings in written communication had to be planned for and conducted.

The chairman of the board of management discussed the results with the Federal CEO's and agreed that online counselling would be cancelled.

**Lesson point:** A longer lead time has to be set aside for evaluation and in order to establish staff training before implementation of this type of service approach can be envisaged.

## Achievement

The aims of this approach were not achieved but it had some positive side effects for the PES. The number of eAMS-account users rose after the service offer ended. Online counselling was only possible in combination with an eAMS-account. Staff were trained in written communication and in using the eAMS-account.

The organisation learned that online counselling alone is not enough to save time for other activities. The "background" work still has to be done, thus it needs more preparations and evaluation time before launching this type of service. These are also necessary considerations for the "Skill Matching" project.

Today, part of the Skill Matching Project aims to reduce face to face contact.

## Belgium, VDAB – Skills-Based Matching

Skills-Based Matching
<p><b>Description</b></p>
<p>Skills-based matching seeks to optimise matching between jobseeker and employer by taking into account skills and competencies, rather than matching solely based on job titles and studies.</p> <p>It signals a new mindset in the PES: filling bottleneck vacancies more easily by valuing competencies which have been validated through <i>experience</i>, whether in professional or private contexts. However, it uses a standard set of competencies based on the French ROME-system. VDAB have imported these standards into their own database, which allows to build services on the competencies standards. The main service is automatic matching based on competencies.</p> <p>The client groups in question are both jobseekers and employers, who need to be “educated” in the power of competency-based matching. VDAB-counsellors also need to follow this new direction.</p>
<p><b>Context</b></p>
<p><b>Drivers</b></p> <p>In the PES’ future vision, mainly inspired by the PES’s CEO Fons Leroy, the labour market will be <i>transitional</i> and <i>volatile</i>. Clear job descriptions will become less frequent; instead, sets of competencies will be required for specific tasks, which means that PES will need to move away from traditional matching procedures.</p> <p>VDAB has been the promoter of competency thinking and it seems that most labour market actors buy into that logic. However, the PES still needs to work on “educating” target groups within this logic. The organisation is therefore investing in this logic this and next year, by launching an internal programme to fine-tune existing matching systems and, most importantly, to motivate relevant actors to use the PES’ logic and systems.</p>
<p><b>Design / Development</b></p> <p>The basic database containing the competency standards (named <i>Competent</i>) is the result of a joint effort between the Flemish social partners (VDAB controls this database technically).</p> <p>VDAB built an intermediate platform linking to this database, in which all job profiles (containing competencies) are stored and maintained. This platform was set up in such a way that services (such as automatic matching) can be run from it, as the technical architecture of the original database (<i>Competent</i>) has a number of limitations.</p> <p>Today, the entire system is not yet fully developed: a number of investments (in IT for example) will be necessary to optimise the system towards an ideal vision. Optimisations are a little behind schedule for completion in 2015, combined with a limited IT-budget.</p> <p>VDAB anticipates the system to be fully operational by start of 2016</p> <p>We can roughly estimate that 70% of the original targets have been developed and are operational, but a complex functionality still needs to be built , namely the possibility for external sources (education, employer, training institution, PES, other partners...) to directly validate competencies for the jobseeker. For now, there is no secure “label” to indicate that the scored competency has indeed been verified by an objective “source”.</p> <p>This type of planning comes naturally with the agile development practice, by which not all pre-conceived functionalities are developed and delivered at once, but incrementally, each step taking into account previous lessons learned.</p>

## Specifics

A complete self-service tool is available via the PES website, both for jobseekers and employers, through which they can score competencies belonging to a specific job profile (imported from *Competent*), and in that way enrich the matching process.

Both jobseeker and employer can, if they wish, add extra competencies which are not immediately proposed in the job profile.

Skills-based matching is functional today. It uses built-in algorithms that match CVs and vacancies across job profiles, meaning that job titles alone are no longer used for matching. The system is operational, meaning there is the possibility to match via skills, but it needs to be further refined and continuously updated and maintained.

## Implementation

A communication programme was launched in 2012 to introduce the new tool to employers and VDAB-counsellors. The programme included demo sessions and manuals on the website. However, the full programme was never fully carried out, which explains the additional actions that are taking place in 2014. It is felt that the optimal use of the tools was not introduced thoroughly enough to counsellors.

On technical aspects, further fine-tuning and development of the tools is currently delayed as mentioned earlier.

## Cost

Main cost (in Euros) went to the development of the database and the (continuous) adaptation of the matching engine. Since the start of 2012, estimated expenditure amounts to > 500,000 Euro.

VDAB has not yet calculated the cost for the extra development required, but a similar amount will be needed and most likely be split in different phases (not everything has to be developed at once).

In terms of promotion inside and outside the organisation, the cost (in FTEs and salaries) has not been calculated, but as mentioned earlier, this will be limited as the implementation process that started in 2012 was probably too "light".

A lesson learned is that a presentation and live demo are not enough when introducing a new mindset/practice. This type of change needs to be followed up and it takes more time and effort than most often planned for. VDAB intend to set up a full training programme for all counsellors and a promotion programme for employers in a corporate/structural way.

## Achievement

No specific objectives were set. Eventually, skills-based matching should help to fill in "difficult" vacancies more easily.

VDAB follows the (quantitative) use of the systems and reports show that people are using competencies considerably more often than they used to. For example, VDAB established that, in the last 12 months, 70% of all vacancies published through VDAB (by employers themselves) showed the use of competencies (detectable because VDAB log every scoring of competencies).

VDAB's next step (also included in the latest programme) is to find indicators for a qualitative evaluation which would ideally be carried out in 2015.

Despite earlier setbacks in the development timeline, VDAB have introduced automatic matching based on competencies, which is an achievement in itself. Fine-tuning and intensive "championing" work will have to be reinforced over the coming years.

## Belgium, VDAB – Online Coaching

Online Coaching
<b>Description</b>
<p>A dedicated team of e-coaches delivers 2 main online services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Since August 2011, the team provides advice to jobseekers and employees on the different phases of the application process. Clients are helped either by mail, textchat, telephone or videochat.</li> <li>▪ Since November 2013, the team also provides guidance to highly educated jobseekers under the age of 25 through several channels (online calendar with appointments, e-mail, telephone, videochat, textchat and social media). The main difference here is the compulsory nature of the service and a higher frequency of contacts.</li> </ul>
<b>Context</b>
<b>Drivers</b>
<p>Several developments and factors contributed to the creation of these online services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>The overall development in customer needs towards fast and 24/7 (self) service:</b> As a government institution, the PES need to continuously modernise ways of approaching the public to remain up-to-date.</li> <li>▪ <b>Growing youth unemployment:</b> Growing youth unemployment creates an additional incentive to reach out to younger jobseekers in ways that are familiar to them.</li> <li>▪ <b>Expanding PES services to employees, to include career counselling:</b> Career guidance is crucial for any employed person, as careers are far less linear than they used to be. In order to connect with that target group, the PES need to optimise and modernise resources as economically as possible.</li> <li>▪ <b>A more tailored approach for jobseekers who need advice on their application process:</b> VDAB-services regarding the application process are split between i) a fast, first line of service for quick advice, and ii) a second line of service for people who need additional training. The online format has proven to be very effective and efficient in providing first line of advice. It allows VDAB to advise jobseekers swiftly (1 minute response time for a textchat and max. 2 working days for an e-mail) and to reach a large audience with a relative small team.</li> <li>▪ <b>Improvement of internal efficiency:</b> VDAB aim to allocate resources where needed and want to devote more time and energy towards individual counselling and guidance for those who really need it. Therefore, the different channels are meant to be complementary to a certain extent (not parallel), in order to avoid increases in communication volumes and workload.</li> <li>▪ <b>A modern Human Resources (HR)-policy:</b> Online channels and cloud-applications make it possible to introduce a more modern HR-policy. E-coaches can work and function together as a team, although they deliver services from different locations (satellite offices, home,...).</li> </ul>
<b>Design / Development</b>
<p>This new team was the first team to work exclusively online. Therefore, the first service was designed and developed by e-coaches and project leaders themselves. This meant that the service was introduced very quickly, and it also meant that a lot of changes were made within the first couple of months based on first experiences of e-coaches and their clients.</p> <p>The homepage was developed by the PES's own web-design team. This page has gone through extensive changes over the past three years in order to keep up with an ever-changing</p>

environment and communication channels (chat and videochat were introduced later) and with expectations from the client (growing use of tablets, the need for 'friendly experts',...).

The online guidance for young, highly educated jobseekers was introduced at the end of 2013. This online guidance was also created by e-coaches and a teamleader. Today, the PES operate this service as a pilot with an evaluation planned for (and now undertaken) in June 2014. The pilot (which counts a limited number of users) allowed the PES to test several hypotheses and different tools, such as:

- An exclusive online guidance is a way of coaching that is customer friendly and meets the needs and expectations of highly educated jobseekers aged under 25.
- The online calendar with appointment slots is a more efficient and client-friendly way to reach out to that target group, rather than the PES inviting jobseekers by appointment. (Note that it was the first time that a jobseeker could choose a date and time for their first appointment).
- An exclusive online guidance is (at least) equivalent to guidance delivered in a PES job-shop.
- This way of working improves internal efficiency.

In order to evaluate these hypotheses the Service Design methodology was used. This methodology enables the PES to design a service according to client needs, so that the service is user-friendly, competitive and relevant to them.

## Specifics

### How it works

**The first service** always starts at the request of the jobseeker him/herself. The homepage is the starting point (see also visual 1). It only comprises 4 buttons to clearly visualise the three main channels of communication. A client can choose to contact the PES by:

- **Mail:** The client fills in a short online form where he/she formulates their question. A personal e-coach will contact them within 2 working days.
- **Chat:** The chat is open every working day from 9 am until 4 pm. An answer can be expected within one minute. If the chat is offline (outside of business hours), the client can still leave a message, which is answered the same or the next working day.
- **Videochat:** Clients can make an appointment using an online calendar to rehearse a job interview online. A videochat takes approximately one hour.

If the client clicks on the fourth button, he/she is directed to a page with a short description of all the e-coaches. The purpose is to further personalise the service.

**The second service** consists of an obligatory guidance and, therefore, is initiated by VDAB. This comprises the following steps:

- **Mail:** The client first receives an e-mail to explain the online guidance process. The mail also informs him/her that an appointment has to be made through the online calendar. Note that the client can choose the moment to have their first conversation with their e-coach.
- **Phone call:** When the client fails to make an appointment, the PES will call him/her to make sure a first appointment is scheduled.
- **First conversation:** The e-coach will contact the client at the appropriate moment and through the selected channel (client's choice).
- **Guidance:** The next steps provides advice relating to the jobseeking process (e.g. advice on the CV, the application letter, rehearsal for a job interview, finding job vacancies, exploring job targets, advice on how to use social media,...). The online channels that are used can vary (mail, videochat, phone, Google Drive,...).

## Implementation

Both services have been adjusted many times since their launch. VDAB are convinced that this is inevitable (and required) for all such services, but especially for online services. Indeed, the online environment changes rapidly and it is important for the PES organisation to stay on track.

Changes made to the **first service** have focused on the look and feel of the homepage. The first version contained too much text and only one channel. Today, the different channels are clear and visible. A challenge which emerged during the implementation was the organisation of the team. In order to deliver an online service that meets the needs of the clients, a performant planning system is needed as well as professional, flexible en motivated e-coaches. All e-coaches had to be trained to gain knowledge of the application process and the use of online channels.

A lot of effort has gone into internal promotion within the organisation. The PES had to make clear that the service is complementary (and not a threat) to the work that takes place in the job-shops. There is always a certain resistance to change throughout an organisation, and in order to implement a new multi-channel approach that would be embedded in the organisational culture, internal communication was very important.

The pilot for the implementation of the **second service** has just been evaluated. Based on this evaluation, VDAB has decided to expand this way of working to all highly educated jobseekers aged under 25. This autumn, coaches in the job-shops will be trained by e-coaches in order to deliver the same service in Flanders.

The biggest challenge when implementing the second service was the training of e-coaches. The PES had to take into account that they were the first coaches who delivered compulsory online guidance. This meant that they had to (self-)learn from their own experiences and from the reactions of their clients. Good coaching and continuous support for the team is extremely important when starting a new service. Thanks to the Services Design methodology, an improved service will be expanded to all highly educated jobseekers aged under 25.

## Cost

The team is considered as an *innovative lab* where the PES can create online services that meet client needs. In order to keep up with developments in online services and guidance, all team members spend a minimum of 10% of their time on improving services and the organisation of the team. The team now consists of 15 people (12.8 Full Time Equivalents).

In relation to usage of online channels, VDAB's IT department is involved to discuss the best solution. Sometimes software packages are purchased (when prices are acceptable), sometimes IT decide to develop a tool themselves (when it is important enough to implement in the organisation). Note that VDAB implement all Google applications throughout the organisation to reduce complexity.

All services are funded from the budget of the PES. For the Service Design methodology, the ESF provides funding.

## Key take-aways

- People expect a quick online guidance. Therefore, a rapid response is a must.
- The client wants a tailormade approach and a personal coach (who advises him/her through the whole process).
- Qualified e-coaches are crucial.
- A performant planning system must be in place to ensure good service levels.

## Achievement

In 2013, the PES provided 4,767 individuals with advice on their application process. In the first year of the textchat, 1000 chats were issued. These figures indicate that the PES have introduced a service which meets people's needs.

All hypotheses for the **second service** were confirmed by the evaluation of the pilot:

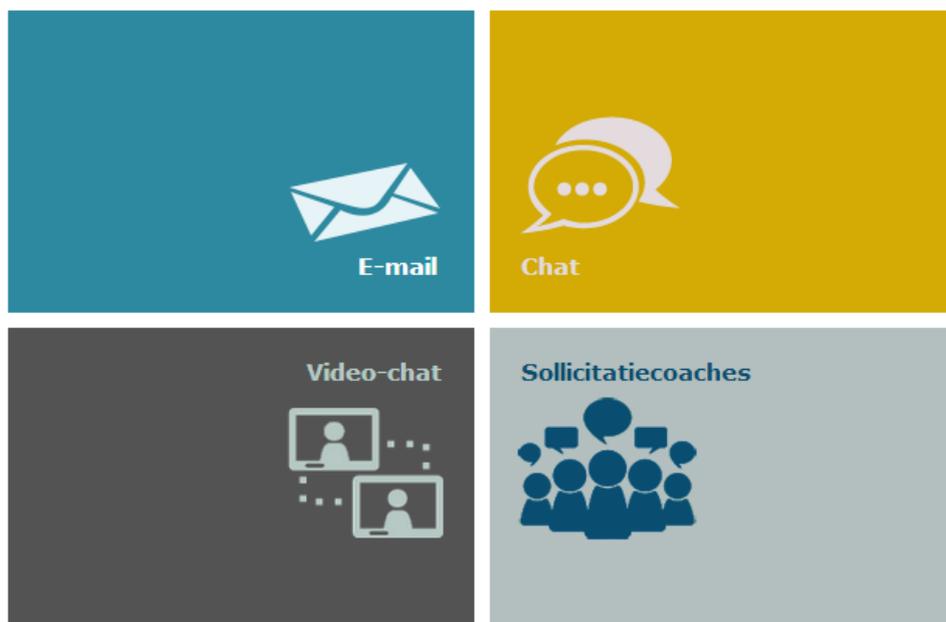
- An exclusive online guidance tends to be a way of coaching that meets the needs and expectations of highly educated jobseekers aged under 25. 85% of them would recommend the service to their friends.
- The online calendar with appointment slots is an instrument that unanimously receives a positive evaluation. Therefore, VDAB have started a new project to introduce this tool in all job-shops.
- An exclusive online guidance tends to be (at least) equivalent to a guidance delivered in the job shops.
- However, it is still unclear whether this way of working is more efficient. It is too early to draw conclusions. Initial figures show that the PES meet at least the same targets as with guidance in the job-shops.

## Visuals

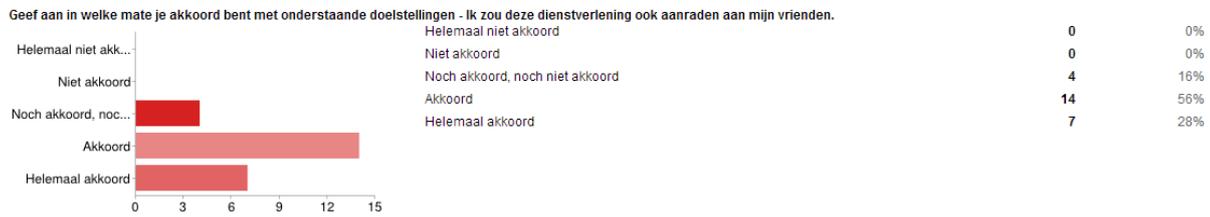
### Visual 1: Current homepage where people can ask advice on their application process (first service)

Home > Begeleiding en oriëntatie > Jobbegeleiding >

#### Online sollicitatiecoaching



**Visual 2: Result of a survey among the young high educated jobseekers (second service): 85% of them would recommend the online guidance to their friends.**



## The Netherlands, UWV WERKbedrijf –The Quality Card CV

Quality Card CV
<b>Description</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Quality Card CV is a service for jobseekers and a tool for advisors.</li> <li>▪ The aim of this service is that customers (jobseekers) have the chance to publish a résumé (CV) which is optimally 'findable' based on their geographical search criteria, choice of professions and comprehensiveness of data.</li> <li>▪ Discussions on a prototype started in December 2013. the implementation period spans mid-July 2014 to mid-August 2014</li> <li>▪ Who uses it: PES staff (counsellors) at the local office and jobseekers (only those who are on unemployment benefit; this excludes individuals who are partly disabled).</li> </ul>
<b>Context</b>
<p><b>Drivers</b></p> <p>The PES initiated this new tool /service. Based on the outcome of earlier data analysis, the PES realised one of its main challenges: the extent to which werk.nl content is skewed towards 'findability' and employability and the service are therefore rendered less effective. The PES measured this inequality with the so-called <i>Gini-coefficient</i>.</p> <p>For instance, more than half of the CV's in werk.nl cannot be matched with <i>any</i> vacancy in werk.nl (based on job type and work distance criteria). Furthermore, more than half of the CV's in werk.nl were not found by an employer in the last two months. These figures are high, which the PES wanted and needed to change (although there is also an economic reason associated with this).</p> <p>The PES took the formal decision to implement the new CV Quality Card tool in April 2014, engaging the directors' board and district managers.</p>
<b>Design / Development</b>
<p>The Quality Card (Q-Card) is developed in-house by the PES' own <i>E-service Work</i> department with the help of an external expert in increasing data quality by analysis and visualisation. The external expert is also the supplier of the actual Q-Card (in pdf format).</p> <p>Based on initial findings from a test undertaken at a local PES office, Haarlem, the quality card was tested further in other pilot locations, in line with the PES's usual implementation method. The method consists of: develop – test – refine – determine general timetable and tools / intervention methods – implement.</p> <p>During these tests, the PES asked 238 jobseekers to give feedback on the Q-Card through a telephone survey.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 61% responses were received (145 out of 238), from very different respondents.</li> <li>▪ 94% of respondents found that the Q-Card provided correct, recognisable information and clear explanations</li> <li>▪ For 66%, the Q-Card provided 'new insights'</li> <li>▪ Modified the CV: 78% did so entirely / 35% did so mostly</li> </ul> <p>Technical conditions: the server has to be able to do data-analysis and visualisation of the data. Legal regulations: use anonymous data to exclude privacy and security issues.</p>

## Specifics

### How it works

The Q-Card contains information obtained by connecting anonymous data from CV's and vacancies, and then determines how well and extensively the CV in question is completed and how well a CV can be found by an employer ('findability').

The Q-Card offers an overview of imperfections in a jobseeker's CV and offers suggestions to improve the 'findability' of that CV in order to better match result and search behaviour. The Q-Card has an explanatory note and suggests improvements: 'expand your search radius', 'give dates for your education', 'use the e-mail service' (when a vacancy appears which matches a CV, the system automatically sends an e-mail), 'repair an inconsistency in you employment record', etc.

Matching CVs with vacancies goes hand in hand with tailored, intra-peer group comparisons. The Q-Card is a "mirror palace": aggregated or statistical information about jobseekers and vacancies from werk.nl and other available sources is fed to similar subjects in werk.nl, in order to empower jobseekers to improve their absolute and relative positions in the job market. See visuals below for more information.

For all jobseekers with an active CV at werk.nl, the external supplier can create a Quality Card at the request of the counsellor. The counsellor uses an 'online-on-demand tool' to log onto the webpage of the supplier, fills in the specific identity number of the jobseeker and the Q-Card appears on the screen. The Q-Card (pdf format) can be printed or saved and then shared with the jobseeker during the interview and in the personal e-folder on Werk.nl.

The counsellor determines, based on his/her experience, if he/she wants to use the Quality Card for the first evaluation interview with the jobseekers in the 4<sup>th</sup> month of unemployment. When the counsellor shares the Q-Card with the customer and discusses the content, he/she also registers an agreement with the jobseeker on improving the online CV. The counsellor places a task in the personal online folder of the jobseeker to remind the jobseeker to use the Q-Card. The jobseeker has the duty to update his/her CV, the counsellor uses the task to track progress / improvement of that CV.

### Implementation

The Q-Card was implemented within the following timeline:

- December 2013: discussion on a prototype in Haarlem and development of a dataset
- January 2014: start of the test period for the prototype in Haarlem, to end of February 2014
- April to May 2014: test period in three other local offices
- June to July 2014: test period in 11 local offices
- 18 July 2014: national implementation in all PES local offices

The implementation includes informing employers in local offices about the implementation strategy of the Q-Card. Employers obtain information on results from test locations and are given the opportunity to use information provided in a 'toolkit'. This toolkit contains instructions, the implementation plan, an example of the Q-Card, a Powerpoint, frequently asked questions (FAQ) built on information from test locations.

The local office management is responsible for informing employers. The management is supported by an Advisor in Quality and Implementation. The Advisor in Q&I is a general role to support the district management with implementation of changes in applications, products and processes and to monitor and support internal control and improvement programmes.

Local managers can obtain information on the progress of implementation via the online-on-demand tool, specifically around:

- Amount of users per local office.
- Amount of Q-Cards requested by counsellors.

Feedback from counsellors:

- Counsellors need approximately 5 minutes extra preparation time for face-to-face interviews, as they need to include Q-Card findings into the conversation
- It enriches their advisory role because they can give targeted improvement advice to the jobseeker
- The strength of the tool lies in its simplicity and the possibility to draw comparison with 'others', free of judgment.

### Cost

Finance comes from the PES's own budget (details are not available).

### Lesson point:

It is very important that the PES delivers high quality and quantity of data, has robust server in place and delivers a good analysis and visualisation tool.

### Achievement

The aims of this initiative were:

- implementing the Q-Card at all local offices
- monitoring results in terms of changes made to CV's and 'findability'
- implementing full use of the Q-Card at the 4<sup>th</sup> month interview
- achieving increased customer satisfaction

During the test period at three local offices:

- 686 Q-Cards were downloaded and discussed with jobseekers
- 392 CV's were changed / improved

The PES also measured improvements: the 'findability' improved 49%, which led to an increase in matches of 6% (matches between CV and vacancy).

The PES aims to maintain such positive results after national implementation of the Q-Card.

Development for the future: make the Q-Card available as an online service for jobseekers.

### Visuals

#### Figure 1:-Q-Card and three Q-Card tips

Tip 1: *Jobseekers with the same desired professions wrote down the following 'experience professions'.* The card shows the amount of vacancies (**aantal vacatures**) on the mentioned 'experience professions'.

Tip 2: *Jobseekers with the same experience also used the following description of professions.* The card shows the amount of vacancies (**aantal vacatures**) and amount of competitors (**aantal concurrenten**).

Tip3: *Jobseekers with the same desired professions looked at the following vacancies at werk.nl.* The Card shows number, title, company and work location of the vacancies.

**CV: 532.956**

Soort	Wensberoep	% Top peers
Wens	Assistent-woonbegeleider gezinsvervangend huis / wooncentrum	6
	Sociaal-cultureel werker, specialisatie samenlevingsopbouw	6
	Sportmanager	14

Ervaring Sportinstructeur / trainer / coach

**Tips**

**Werkzoekenden met vergelijkbare werkervaring (aantal vacatures):**

Beroepsnaam	Aantal vacatures	Aantal concurrenten
Fitnesstrainer	5	4
Docent lichamelijke oefening (1e graads)	2	7
Sport- en bewegingsleider	0	5
Zwemonderwijzer	7	3
Kobrier auto	4	334
Administratief medewerker secretariaat	65	465
Fysiotherapeut	5	6
Commercieel medewerker binnendienst	299	525
Commercieel medewerker	39	394
→	35	481

**Tips**

**Werkzoekenden met uw gewenste functies vulden als beroep (aantal vacatures):**

Beroepsnaam	Aantal vacatures
Woonbegeleider gezinsvervangend huis, wooncentrum	20
Activiteitenbegeleider	n
Maatschappelijk werker, specialisatie volwassenen	
Leider kinderopvang	
Maatschappelijk werker, specialisatie	
Coördinator sociaal-cultureel werk	
Sociaal-cultureel werker, specialisatie	
Helpende thuiszorg	
Sociaal dienstverlener	
Helpende instelling	

**Tips**

**Werkzoekenden met uw gewenste functies bekeken deze vacatures op werk.nl:**

Nummer	Titel	Bedrijf	Werklocatie
4619030	Gezocht adviseurs zorg en welzijn	Carewel Producten BV	Rijswijk Zh (*)
4400940	Social Workers Locatie UK	Jacaranda Recruitment Ltd	Alkmaar (*)
4690372	Aeden Zorgconsulent	Aeden Zorg	Heemstede (*)
2474155	verzorgende nivo 3 thuiszorg	RH Recruitment/Hagenstein Beheer BV	Utrecht (*)
2893964	verzorgende nivo 3 in de thuiszorg	RH Recruitment/Hagenstein Beheer BV	Utrecht (*)
988251	verzorgende	RH Recruitment/Hagenstein Beheer BV	Hilversum
4695672	Klantmanager	MaiReg Detachering	Amsterdam (*)

The jobseeker describes in the CV what kind of professions he/she desires (**wens / wensberoepen**) and what the last profession was (experience = **ervaring**)

Illustration 1: General information presented in an Q-Card:

<b>Publication status:</b>	<b>Active</b>
<b>CV Title (experience / last profession):</b>	<b>Business consultant ICT</b>
<b>Desired profession:</b>	<b>Photographer Proces manager (municipality) Business consultant - ICT</b>
<b>Privacy level:</b>	<b>Open</b>
<b>Allowed to contact by telephone:</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Last change:</b>	<b>29 January 2014</b>

**Illustration 2: Example of a Q-Card outcome presenting what is good vs what needs to improve**

	<b>Good</b>	<b>To improve</b>
<b>Amount of desired professions:</b>	<b>3</b>	
<b>Amount of identical desired professions:</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>Do the desired professions have a explanation:</b>	<b>Yes</b>	
<b>Are the desired professions in line with the experience / last profession:</b>	<b>Yes</b>	
<b>Filled in employment record:</b>	<b>Yes</b>	
<b>Complete description of the employment record:</b>		<b>Description is missing (3 times)</b>
<b>Filled in education record:</b>	<b>Yes</b>	
<b>Complete description of education record:</b>		<b>Education and / or birthdate is unlikely (2 times)</b>
<b>Has a personal presentation:</b>		<b>Nee</b>
<b>Has a search radius of more than 20 km:</b>	<b>Yes</b>	
<b>Has email-service:</b>		<b>Nee</b>

## The Netherlands, UWV WERKbedrijf – Work Profiler

<p><b>Work Profiler</b></p>
<p><b>Description</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Work Profiler is an instrument for the diagnosis and selection of unemployed, aiming to provide tailored service provision to clients on unemployment benefits.</li> <li>▪ In 2006, UWV undertook research to create an instrument that would aid professionals in unemployment agencies in their contact with jobseekers by identifying ‘predictors’ for work resumption. In May 2013, the Work Profiler was implemented at three unemployment agencies and from January 2014, the pilot was extended to 11 unemployment agencies.</li> <li>▪ Today, the job seeker fills in a short questionnaire containing 20 questions within the first three months of unemployment. The counsellor will discuss the result with the client, which he/she can see in the system, and allocate him tailored (e-) services. In the future, the client will fill in the questionnaire and the system alone will give him/her a result for tailored e-services.</li> <li>▪ The 20 questions in the Work Profiler relate to 11 hard and soft factors that are predictive for a return to work. The Work Profiler provides two outcomes, based on the answers given by the client. The first outcome shows the client’s chance of resuming work within one year. The second outcome provides a quick diagnosis by illustrating which of the 11 predictive factors for work resumption need to be positively influenced in order to increase the client’s chances of returning to work in that same one year period.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Context</b></p>
<p><b>Drivers</b></p> <p>In 2006, UWV undertook research to create an instrument that would aid professionals in unemployment agencies in their contact with jobseekers by identifying ‘predictors’ for work resumption. At the time, unemployed clients only used face-to-face services. However, by the time the research was completed and the Work Profiler was created (2011), much had changed. Budget cuts imposed by the Dutch government pushed UWV to switch from face-to-face to computerised services as the main contact channel. Today, all jobseekers on unemployment benefits (which are able) make use of computerised services and only a small number of clients access additional face-to-face services. The Work Profiler was not initially developed for the digital environment, but it proved adaptable and now operates within a computerised environment.</p> <p>Because UWV switched to digital services only a few years ago, much development and implementation work is still being carried out. Nevertheless, the introduction of the Work Profiler has been successful and the majority of unemployed client exclusively use computer-based services today. Every unemployed person has access to their own individual digital environment through an online portal. This personalised environment is a personal digital e-folder, called <i>Werkmap</i> in the Netherlands</p> <p>The Work Profiler is in fact one of various functions located within the digital environment of the e-folder, which the client is asked to complete at the start of their unemployment. Based upon his outcome (see above), the client may be given additional face-to-face services.</p>
<p><b>Design / Development</b></p> <p>The research for the questionnaire was undertaken by the Knowledge Centre of UWV in cooperation with the University of Groningen. It aimed to establish the most predictive factors for work resumption. After the research was completed, UWV Werkbedrijf designed and digitalised this questionnaire to implement it in the systems, using a multi-disciplinary team comprising a product developer, a business analysts, a process developer and a range of stakeholders. The system engineering was using a scrum (agile) method with software engineers in cooperation with the</p>

product developer. This was done in-house with the support of an external software supplier. In May 2013, the Work Profiler was implemented at three unemployment agencies and from January 2014, the pilot was extended to 11 unemployment agencies. The pilots were implemented by the product developer in cooperation with the implementation department of UWV Werkbedrijf. Today, the PES measures responses to the questionnaires (the percentage of completed tasks) and undertakes customer surveys. The PES will research net efficiency of tailored e-services in the future as well. The PES also undertook an evaluation.

## Specifics

### How it works

Upon registering, a client will automatically get a task in the personal e-folder, after the PES has assured that the client is on unemployment benefit. The link will lead to an introduction page and then to the Work Profiler questionnaire.

Responses in the questionnaire are temporarily stored. If the client logs in at a later moment, he/she can continue where he/she left off. Should the client not have completed some questions on a page, these items will appear in red when the client attempts clicks on the next step.

After filling out the questionnaire, the client arrives at a check-out page. This is the last opportunity for the customer to check and improve his/her answers. All answers are sent via the system thereafter.

Upon finalising the questionnaire, the client will get to a page with general tips. These tips will be further developed in the future into more tailored services for client.

The system generates a PDF-file with the answers of the client; it stores this file in the personal e-folder under "My documents" and automatically shares it with a counsellor. The counsellor will have a screen in the system showing: 1) the predicted probability for return to work within a year, and 2) the factors that hinder return to work and need attention. This information can be used at further face-to-face contact. In the future, the client will get tailored feedback with tips to e-services. With the measuring of the net efficiency, the PES can find out if tailored feedback is effective and if the client will find a job sooner. The profiler will not update the predicted probability if the counsellor enters new activities in the system.

### Implementation

After implementation of the Work Profiler into the PES systems (phase 1), the tool was implemented across offices for counsellors in cooperation with the product developer and the implementation department. The introduction of the tool was done through a workshop for counsellors to learn to work with the instrument.

In May 2013, three offices started (phase 2) working with the Work Profiler. In July 2013, an evaluation was published, on the basis of which improvements were made. In January 2014, the PES added eight new offices to the implementation (adding up to a total of 11). In May 2014, the final evaluation of the pilot was undertaken.

At the present time (Summer 2014), the PES is developing the tailored digital feedback function for the Work Profiler (phase 3). The implementation will take place in the early months of 2015. In the meantime, the PES are looking for possibilities to launch a pilot with the Work Profiler as a selection tool for the selection of basic or intensive service.

### Achievement

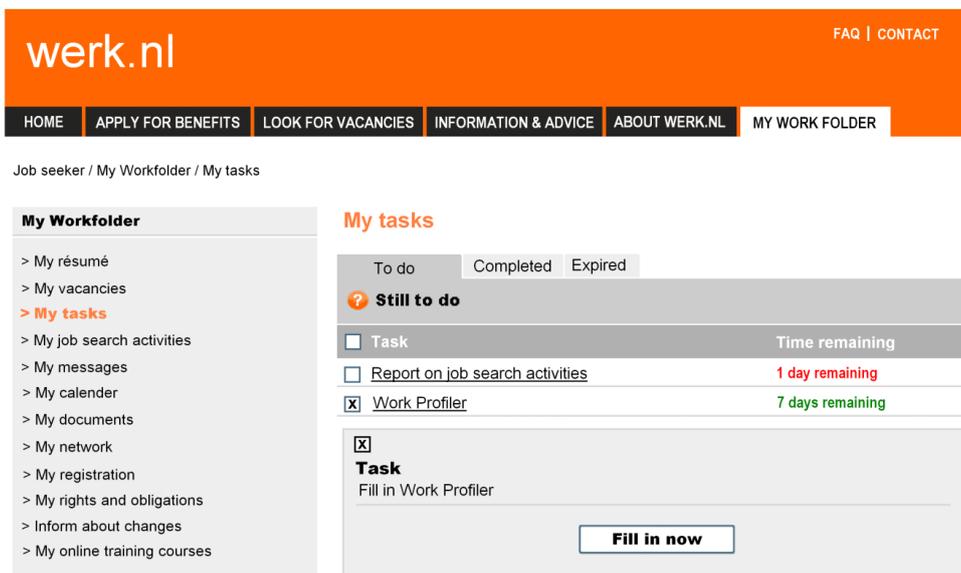
Today, just over 60% of customers fill in the questionnaire. However, some do not understand the purpose of filling in the questionnaire because the PES has not fully developed phase 3 yet: the digital feedback.

Not all counsellors always use the results (outcomes) of the exercise at the face-to-face contact, and this appears to be for different reasons. They do however call the tool a 'nice-to-have'. Counsellors also indicate that it has little or no impact on their work.

With these results from the evaluation, the PES wants to develop the digital feedback as soon as possible. The questionnaire is able to handle almost any client questions and clients have no problems filling in the questionnaire. Today, clients evaluate the tool with a 6.7 (scale 1-10), the question was: "If you must give a figure for the questionnaire (in general) what would it be?"

## Visuals

**Figure 1. The online personal environment of the work folder, where jobseekers will find the questionnaire underpinning the Work Profiler (translated screenshot for the purpose of this article)**

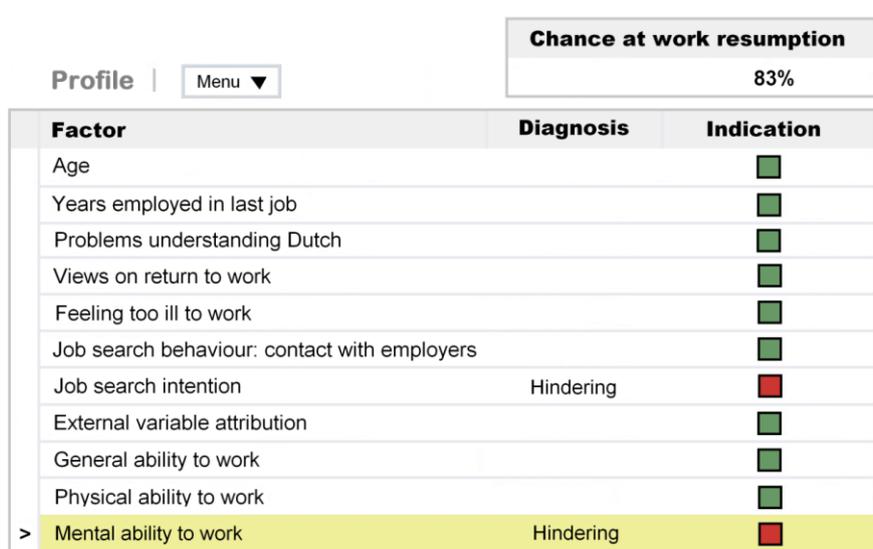


The screenshot shows the 'werk.nl' website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'HOME', 'APPLY FOR BENEFITS', 'LOOK FOR VACANCIES', 'INFORMATION & ADVICE', 'ABOUT WERK.NL', and 'MY WORK FOLDER'. Below this, the user is logged in as 'Job seeker / My Workfolder / My tasks'. The 'My Workfolder' sidebar on the left lists various options, with 'My tasks' highlighted. The main content area is titled 'My tasks' and has tabs for 'To do', 'Completed', and 'Expired'. Under the 'To do' tab, there is a 'Still to do' section. A table lists tasks with checkboxes, task names, and time remaining:

Task	Time remaining
<input type="checkbox"/> Report on job search activities	1 day remaining
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Work Profiler	7 days remaining

The 'Work Profiler' task is expanded to show a 'Task' section with the instruction 'Fill in Work Profiler' and a 'Fill in now' button.

**Figure 2. The two outcomes of the Work Profiler as seen by the professional (translated and simplified screenshot)**



The screenshot shows the 'Chance at work resumption' as 83%. Below this is a table with columns for 'Factor', 'Diagnosis', and 'Indication'.

Factor	Diagnosis	Indication
Age		Green
Years employed in last job		Green
Problems understanding Dutch		Green
Views on return to work		Green
Feeling too ill to work		Green
Job search behaviour: contact with employers		Green
Job search intention	Hindering	Red
External variable attribution		Green
General ability to work		Green
Physical ability to work		Green
> Mental ability to work	Hindering	Red

## Sweden, Arbetsförmedlingen – Co-Browsing, Services on the Web

Co-Browsing, Services on the Web
<b>Description</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A Java Script (software) installed on the website enables visual guiding, hands-on support, one-to-one service delivery by using a combination of co-browsing, text- and audio communication or video. The tool makes skill routing possible (skills routing assigns employment officers who can best support jobseekers based on skills requirements).</li> <li>▪ It is easy to scale the service up or down according to needs and visitor patterns. This allows to segment and target specific visitor groups and offer them support by employment officers who best meet the knowledge requirements of their particular group.</li> <li>▪ There are many ways to use this technique. During the pilot, employment officers at the contact center have been the main users, together with the customers they serve (both jobseeker and employers). From the start of the project, the PES identified other potential users such as specialists, special- branch officers, service/support providers to disabled individuals or service providers in other languages.</li> <li>▪ The aim is to further improve the service to customers and visitors on the PES website. The purpose is to support the customer in their use of e-services / self-services, thus making it a key factor in fulfilling the plans of e- service expansions and the realisation of the PES' Development Strategy.</li> <li>▪ The service was launched on the PES website in February 2014 through a pilot.</li> <li>▪ Project extension and expansion from June to December 2014.</li> </ul>
<b>Context</b>
<p><b>Drivers</b></p> <p>The potential of this tool was recognised at the Market Area level and later included in the PES common development-plan (NEXT-program).</p> <p>The main drivers of this project, on which the subsequent purchase of the service for online-support and co-browsing is based, are the targets/effects formulated in the PES Development Strategy. Some of the desired effects from this system are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The "creation" of a virtual PES on the Internet.</li> <li>▪ The expansion and improvement of the "active services" provided on the Internet (active services offer web-visitors contextual support/guidance by trained experts and/or employment officers, as well as the ability to participate in various labour market related activities online).</li> <li>▪ Supporting the customers in their own job seeking process.</li> <li>▪ Contributing to the following goal: "Public employment service should, as far as possible, be offered on the Internet. This will increase the accessibility and make it easier for jobseekers and employers the take part in the public employment service".</li> </ul> <p>The "Arbetsförmedlingen Development Strategy" is the underpinning document for this work.</p>
<b>Design / Development</b>
<p>The co-browsing tool was procured by open call for tender.</p> <p>After procurement, the PES prepared for implementation. To a minor extent, this involved the IT and the Department of Communications at Arbetsförmedlingen (PES). Most of the work described below involved the project and the service suppliers as well as employment officers.</p>

#### Preparations involved:

- Installation and configuration of the software on the PES website (IT+ supplier).
- Deciding on which parts of the website this support was to be offered, and based on what criteria (triggers).
- Designing and making GUI (graphical user interface) decisions.
- Producing help-text, FAQ links and films/manuals (creation of user cases to assist officers in their dialogue with customers).
- Training of 20 employment officers.
- Preparing activities for evaluation.
- Staffing/scheduling- prognosis and appointing staff with suitable skills
- Methodology -adjusting employment officers' work methods to work with the co-browsing tool.

#### Evaluations

Results from the customer survey evaluation (a web-survey specific for this service was activated when the service was launched, and the PES are still collecting data) showed over 90% customer satisfaction with the service provided. 92% of nearly 1600 respondents said they "would prefer this type of support/assistance again".

According to calculations based on the number of customers an employment officer can handle per hour, this way of supporting jobseekers is much more efficient than e-mail, face-to-face or telephone. This is mainly because the officer can handle multiple "cases" at one time in the "new" system. Another reason for this are the pre-prepared text and auto texts, links and FAQ's that are connected to each case type configured. On average, an employment officer manages 6 telephone calls per hour. So far the average number of handled dialogues with the co-browsing tool is around 10 per hour.

#### Specifics

##### How it works

The Java script (software) installed on the website enables visual guiding, real-time support, one-to-one service delivery by using combinations of co-browsing, text- and audio communication or video. The tool makes skill routing possible. This is achieved by creating skill-based user groups and then assigning them to staff for support in specific areas of the website. For example, employer experts provide support on the webpage for vacancy registration. One of the benefits of online services is that experts can be located anywhere in the organisation.

The offer of assistance is presented as a clickable banner on selected pages (according to strategic decisions made by the Head of the Market Area).

It is easy to scale this service up or down according to needs and visitor patterns. This allows to segment and target specific visitor groups and offer them support by employment officers who best meet the knowledge requirements of their particular group.

There is also an administrative module in which configurations can be made to the customer interface and the interface used by the officers helping customers on the website. This is also where registration of user IP/ password /roles can be handled. The range of configuration possibilities is too complex to be described here.

##### Preparing for implementation

The implementation of this tool is not completed yet, it is still work in progress. From June to December 2014, the PES will increase the number of officers working with the system, widen the service scope and integrate the tool with the PES's own system for identification. If successful, the PES will have a solution which meets all the legal and security requirements for case handling over

the Internet.

The preparations consisted of: (6 months+ 5 months for evaluation + a 6 months extension)

- Installation and configuration of the software on the website (IT and the Department of Communications)
- Deciding on which parts of the website this support was to be offered and by what criteria
- Design and GUI decisions (IT and the Department of Communications)
- Producing help-text, FAQ, auto-text and films/manual (creation of user cases to assist officers in their dialogue with customer)
- Training of 20 employment officers.
- Preparing activities for evaluation (surveys)
- Testing before implementation (IT) (approximately 2 weeks )
- Staffing/scheduling
- Methodology

### **Implementation**

After the launch in February 2014, the PES ran into minor technical issues, but most had to do with compatibility and limitation issues in the PES IT-environment.

Testing and evaluation of headsets and web cameras was undertaken during the first month.

During the implementation period, a number of adjustments in staffing/ scheduling had to be made due to differences in actual demand compared to prognosis. The number of visitors (and therefore the need for support) was not evenly divided within the month on the webpage with co-browsing. The number of visits peaked in the middle of the month.

### **Cost**

The tool is financed from the PES's own budget.

All figures are approximate and vary according to number of users, functions, service level agreements and/or opening hours:

- The external costs for the project during 2014 is estimated to approx. 180 000 Euros. This includes 50 user licenses, hosting of data, support and some costs for a consultant to implement the service on the website.
- Internal costs for testing, technical adjustments, project management: approx. 100 000 Euros.
- External cost for consultants may apply depending on which parts of the website this service will be implemented.
- Training\*: Administrators/ Employment Officers, approx. 1100 Euros/occasion.
- Staffing cost = 28 Euro/h\* working hours for officers.  
(During the "Pilot" the PES had 20 officers scheduled to work half the time with the co-browsing tool, approx. 42 000 Euros/month).

### **Achievement**

It is too early to discuss achievements at this stage. This would have to be discussed again by December 2014.