



Case study:

A 'Virtual Labour Market Platform' for the Public Employment Service in Germany

19 December 2011

Contents

1	Background.....	2
2	The ‘Virtual Labour Market’ platform.....	3
2.1	Rationale: the need for a modern system with greater functionality	3
2.2	A system made up of three components (VerBIS, JOBBÖRSE and Job-Robot)	3
2.3	Technical Architecture.....	4
3	Added value for the different target groups.....	5
3.1	JOBBÖRSE: Added value for job-seekers.....	5
3.2	JOBBÖRSE: Added value for companies.....	5
3.3	An intelligent search function based on competences.....	5
3.4	VerBIS: Added value for PES staff	6
3.5	Embedding the three components into the four-phases-model	6
4	Implementation, monitoring and further development.....	9
4.1	Resources (human and financial) required	9
4.2	Training needs	9
4.3	Monitoring and evaluation	9
4.4	Challenges	10
4.5	Next steps	11
5	Potential for transferability	12
Annex 1	List of sources	14

1 Background

In October 2010, the German Federal Ministry for Labour and Social Affairs hosted a Peer Review in Berlin focusing on the host country practice of early, systematic intervention for jobseekers in order to reintegrate them back into the labour market. Since the beginning of 2009, PES in Germany have been obliged to conduct a potential and a needs analysis immediately after the first contact with the jobseeker, i.e. for most clients three months prior to the start of unemployment.

The Peer Review highlighted the so-called 'four phases model' of re-integration, consisting of 1) profiling, 2) goal definition, 3) selection of intervention strategy, and 4) implementation and monitoring. A joint agreement is concluded with each jobseeker and followed up on a regular basis.

Successful reintegration requires an appropriate linkage between the jobseekers' skills and – where necessary – their enhancement to meet the requirements of the labour market, thus matching the needs of the employer and the jobseeker. In Germany, this process is supported by a Virtual Labour Market platform consisting of three elements:

- Jobboerse – an online job portal for job seekers and employers (www.jobboerse.arbeitsagentur.de);
- VerBIS – the internal IT-system supporting the PES' core functions (employment service and vocational counselling);
- JobRobot – an online 'job-crawler' that collects job vacancies from company websites and posts them in the PES' intranet.

Many countries use profiling to support the segmentation of jobseekers allowing for the targeted planning of integration pathways with proven outcomes. There was significant interest among Peer Review participants in the online support system used in Germany which brings together information about jobseekers' profiles with systematic and regularly updated occupational and qualifications databases, local and regional labour market data and an evidence-based catalogue of measures, all of which support the 'human' decision making element by dedicated advisors. A number of participants at the Peer Review expressed interest in a potential follow-up activity, focusing on this tool and its features.

This case study has been designed to facilitate a better understanding of the three-part 'Virtual Labour Market Platform'. In the next section, the platform is described in detail. In Section 4, the added value for the three main target groups and the embedding of VerBIS in the four-phase-model is outlined. Section 5 discusses several features of the implementation, monitoring and further development process. Lastly, the case study reflects briefly on the potential for transferability to other countries.

2 The 'Virtual Labour Market' platform

2.1 Rationale: the need for a modern system with greater functionality

Public employment service (PES) in Germany aim to provide free and impartial services to maintain the balance of supply and demand on the labour market and to make jobseekers fit for employment.

The Federal Employment Agency (Bundesagentur fuer Arbeit) represents the public employment service (hereinafter PES). It provides placement services through its 178 employment agencies and around 610 local offices.¹

The project to develop a 'Virtual Labour Market' (VLM) was implemented between 2003 and 2006 and funded by the PES' own means². The initial aim of the project was to analyse and improve internal ICT-processes. It was felt that the job-seeking tool available before the VLM required improvement, as it was not up to the standard of the competition and was perceived as less attractive than its market competitors.

For the VLM, a decentralised system of around 180 regional servers had to be reformed. These servers only provided regional data and were not interconnected on a trans-regional level; thus, information about jobs in other regions was not available, trans-regional job-placement was impossible, and previous information about jobseekers who moved was not accessible.

Consequently the main objectives of the 'Virtual Labour Market' project were:

- The development of a state-of the art job-seeking tool, attractive for employers as well as for jobseekers;
- The development of consistent, centralised IT databases;
- The development of a consistent tool to support the work of counsellors;
- The development of coordinated, aligned and well-connected internal procedures.

However, at the same time, a comprehensive reform of the German labour market was on-going; which coincided with the introduction of a basic income support scheme for jobseekers and an improvement of the support available to persons in need of enhanced assistance (e.g. long-term unemployed persons and persons with disadvantages on the labour market). The 'challenge and support' principle was introduced, which is connected to a so-called four-phases-model for the placement process (regulated by the law). Throughout the process, the VLM project was aligned to the reform; an additional objective of adapting the different components of the VLM to the four-phase-model was established.

2.2 A system made up of three components (VerBIS, JOBBÖRSE and Job-Robot)

The Virtual Labour Market is a common platform for use by all labour market actors (PES, employers, jobseekers, training institutions, public organisations, private recruiters, third parties etc.).

As mentioned above, the VLM consists of three components: Jobboerse, VerBIS and JobRobot. The three components are closely interlinked. The platform was designed as an instrument to match jobseeker profiles with companies with job vacancies and to help PES-staff to administer client data and develop strategies for the reintegration of the jobseeker into the labour market.

For Jobboerse and VerBIS, 180 regional servers have been merged. This enables the system to process a higher amount of data and provide improved search results, but at the same time also poses higher demands in terms of security measures, since a centralised server is more prone to attacks.

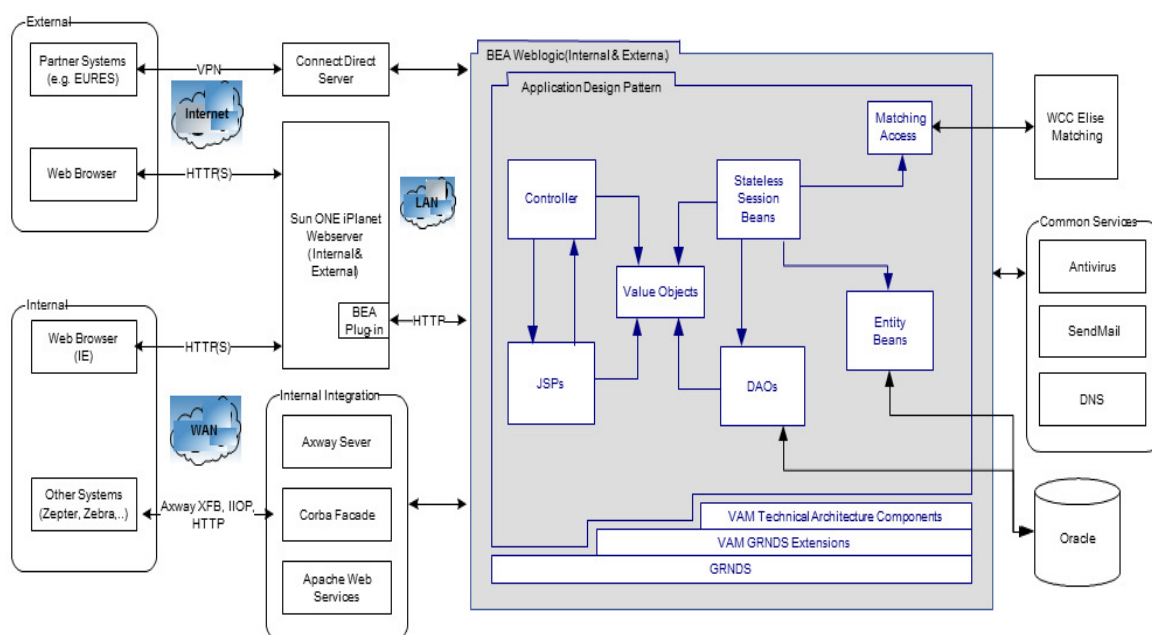
¹ cf. Official paper prepared by host country for peer reviewing event in October 2010. Available online: http://www.mutual-learning-employment.net/uploads/ModuleXtender/PeerReviews/84/Official_paper-Germany.pdf

² Public Employment Services in Germany are funded by statutory levies from employers and employees.

2.3 Technical Architecture

The VLM is based on a modern and highly functional user interface. It provides user-specific homepages with key search features and direct links. It allows the user to identify different qualification levels, from assistants to managers, and has easy 'Google-like' search features.

VLM's runtime architecture is a multi-channel architecture based on a role-based portal framework. The following picture illustrates the technical architecture of the VLM.



Picture: Presentation by Michael Adam, BA, 2011

3 Added value for the different target groups

3.1 JOBBÖRSE: Added value for job-seekers

Jobseekers have the option to manage their applications and generate and send complete online applications according to employers' demands (input wizard to generate complete resumes, skills descriptions, cover letters, the upload of individual attachments, selection of centrally stored attachments). A click-search-for-job feature and a search assistant that notifies the jobseeker about suitable jobs by e-mail are provided. The platform also allows for online registration for unemployment benefits.

The end-to-end process for jobseekers is as follows:

1. The jobseeker registers online for benefits (Jobboerse).
2. The jobseeker creates his or her own profile (Jobboerse).
3. The jobseeker is notified about an interview at the PES (VerBIS).
4. During the interview with a counsellor, the jobseeker's personal data and profile are reviewed. An integration plan is developed. (VerBIS).
5. The system runs a search process looking for matching job vacancies (VerBIS).
6. The jobseeker receives a number of job offers (VerBIS).
7. The jobseeker applies online for the jobs offered (Jobboerse).
8. The jobseeker receives feedback from the company (Jobboerse).
9. The jobseeker notifies the counsellor about the outcome of the application process (VerBIS).
10. If the jobseeker receives positive feedback, he/she is 'checked out' of benefit payments (VerBIS).

3.2 JOBBÖRSE: Added value for companies

Employers in Germany are not legally obliged to report vacancies to the PES. However, to learn about as many vacancies as possible is an important pre-condition for the successful work of any PES. Therefore, a tool that is perceived as attractive by employers to search for suitable candidates is highly important.

Jobboerse offers companies the option to set up multiple user accounts and assign job vacancies, applications, messages, issue profile watch lists for job vacancies; or edit a short form to register workforce demand. It also allows for an advanced company presentation to job-seekers.

VLM offers the following end-to-end process to companies:

1. The company creates a job vacancy (Jobboerse).
2. The company registers for BA's support service (Jobboerse).
3. A member of PES company services is notified (VerBIS).
4. The PES staff member reviews company and vacancy details together with the company (VerBIS). The system runs a search process looking for jobseekers with matching profiles (VerBIS).
5. Several matching jobseekers are informed about the job offers (VerBIS).
6. The company receives applications from registered job seekers (VerBIS).
7. The company sends out feedback to the jobseeker (Jobboerse).
8. The company notifies the counsellor about the outcome of the application process (VerBIS).
9. If the company finds a matching applicant suitable for the post, the job vacancy is 'checked out' (VerBIS).

3.3 An intelligent search function based on competences

For both target groups, i.e. jobseekers and companies, an intelligent search function based on competences provides added value. All applicant profiles and job offers are recorded based on a consistent structure and integrated into the matching process.

A specific matching technology³ constitutes the core of VLM. Unlike other search functions which only provide search results that match all search criteria, the matching engine of the VLM facilitates the matching of datasets and shows to which degree these sets match. That way, a jobseeker searching for a job that matches his or her qualification and experiences in his home town also receives search results matching his or her profile only to a certain degree, but which might also be suitable (e.g. a job offer in a neighbouring town that matches his experiences only to a smaller degree). The results are presented according to the degree of compliance.

Furthermore, the matching-technology works 'bi-directionally', which means it is able to match the preferences of the jobseeker with the vacancy but is also able to match the preferences of the employer with the demands of the potential employee⁴.

The matching technology considers over 40 criteria with different weightings. That way, not only the initial qualification of the jobseeker is taken into account but also competences and learning outcomes he or she acquired via non-formal, informal or on-the-job learning or continuing training.

3.4 VerBIS: Added value for PES staff

VerBIS is an internal IT-system supporting the PES' core functions, namely the provision of employment services and vocational counselling. VerBIS may be seen as core element of the VLM, since it constitutes around 75% of the entire project (Jobboerse represents around 20%, Job-Robot around 2% and online databases on vocational qualifications and other information, 3%).⁵

VerBIS supports all processes linked to counselling, job placement and the payment of unemployment benefits. Automatic functions and notifications facilitate the administration of client data and the four-step process of profiling, goal definition, selection of intervention strategies, implementation and monitoring (see Section 4).

The VLM provides a centralised database and grants access to the client data for different user groups. The scope of access rights differs according to the tasks of PES staff: receptionists, client counsellors, the benefits department, employers' service staff and back office staff all have access to the compiled client data, but to a different extent. For instance, personal data like birth dates, addresses and financial details are not accessible for all groups alike. Consequently, VerBIS provides user-specific homepages with group-specific key search features and links.

3.5 Embedding the three components into the four-phases-model

Since the beginning of 2009, PES in Germany have been obliged to commence a potential and a needs analysis immediately after the first contact with the jobseeker, i.e. for most clients three months prior to the start of unemployment. This analysis is based on a so-called 'four phase model' providing a structure for interaction with jobseekers.

The model consists of 1) profiling, 2) goal definition, 3) selection of intervention strategy, and 4) implementation and monitoring. Each of these steps is intended to build on the previous one. The goal definition and intervention strategy steps are based on statutory provisions according to which the initial 'potential analysis' or profiling takes place, to identify labour market-related support needs and to set out the integration objective. An integration agreement with the jobseeker, based on the initial profiling, defines concrete steps for

³ ELISE by WCC Smart Search & Match.

⁴ Case Study, Bundesagentur für Arbeit. WCC/Accenture, Available online: http://wcc-group.com/document.aspx?menu=solutions_004&page=download_document&id=95364904

⁵ iso/Ochs (2006): Evaluation der Maßnahmen zur Umsetzung der Vorschläge der Hartz-Kommission. Arbeitspaket 2: Umbau der BA. Bericht 2006. Saarbrücken.
http://www.iso-institut.de/download/2007_01_16_iso-ochs-Bericht_BAEval_%20AP2.pdf

eliminating obstacles to placement and the jobseeker's obligation to undertake personal efforts. Progress concerning the measures set out in the agreement is to be examined at specified intervals in order to amend the placement strategy as necessary. A joint agreement is concluded with each jobseeker, which is followed up on a regular basis⁶.

The model is envisaged as an individualised, needs-oriented and flexible placement process. The decisions regarding goal definition and the selection of intervention strategies is mainly based on the technical expertise of the advisors and counsellors and developed jointly in face-to-face sessions with the client. However, the different features of the VLM support this process in several ways⁷, as described below.

Profiling

Placement efforts should begin as early as possible. Therefore, during the process of labour market reform, a requirement has been issued for the jobseeker to register without delay with the PES after receiving notice of dismissal (or three months prior to the end of a contract of limited duration). An early registration requirement for jobholders at-risk is in place⁸.

To learn about the jobseeker's strengths and shortcomings, a differentiated profiling is initiated⁹. As soon as the jobseeker registers with the PES, applicants are invited to enter their profile online into the 'Jobboerse' portal (see Section 3.1). The profile entered into Jobboerse is transferred into VerBIS, where it can be accessed and examined by the counsellor.

The profiling identifies clients' individual support needs and provide a prognosis on the client's distance from the labour market and probable duration of job search according to six client profiles:

- Market profile: Clients without placement-related gaps (1 -6 months); Activation profile: Clients with gaps in 'motivation' (1 -6 months);
- Promotion profile (Förderprofil): Clients with simpler gaps in qualifications, capabilities, or in their personal circumstances (1- 12 months)
- Development profile: Clients with gaps in qualifications, capabilities, or in their circumstances as well as in a further dimension, or a severe gap in one of the former (> 12 months);
- Stabilisation profile: Clients with gaps in capabilities as well as at least in two other dimensions, or a severe gap in one of the former (1- 12 months);
- Support profile: Clients with gaps in 'circumstances' as well as at least in two other dimensions or a severe gap in 'circumstances' (>12 months).

For job-ready persons, profiling would normally take place during the first interview, which is planned and scheduled with the help of the VerBIS calendar and appointments planning tool. A total of 60 minutes are recommended for the first interview, including preparation and post-interview record-keeping (entered into VerBIS). There are a number of software-supported tools to assist job counsellors in profiling and assigning clients to profile groups (e.g.

⁶ cf. Official paper prepared by host country for peer reviewing event in October 2010. Available online: http://www.mutual-learning-employment.net/uploads/ModuleXtender/PeerReviews/84/Official_paper-Germany.pdf

⁷ The information in the following section is based on previously published information in the paper 'Reform of placement services.' Peer Review on "Systematic Preventive Integration Approach (Support) for Jobseekers and Unemployed" Germany, 28-29 October, submitted by Hugh Mosley in consortium with GHK Consulting Ltd and CERGE-EI. Available online: http://www.mutual-learning-employment.net/uploads/ModuleXtender/PeerReviews/84/Host_Country_Paper_Germany_Final_circulated13Sep.pdf, as well as on statements made during the interview with Mr. Adam from BA

⁸ Jobholders are obliged to register as jobseekers three months before the end of their employment or, for those with shorter notice, within three days of receiving notice of dismissal, under threat of a sanction (denial of benefit for one week; §38 & §144 SGB III).

⁹ A "potential analysis" for newly registered jobseekers must be conducted "without delay" (§37 SGB III).

‘Calculating Labour Market Chances’ (BAC) and ‘Profiling Criteria Catalogue’) but the responsibility lies ultimately with the individual job counsellor or case manager, who may ultimately override the software recommendation¹⁰.

Goal definition

During the counselling sessions, an integration agreement between the placement counsellor and the jobseeker commits both sides to the targets of the placement process and the scope for ‘support and challenge’. This provides for transparency throughout the whole placement process and is recorded in VerBIS.

On the basis of the profiling results, the job counsellor or case manager develops jointly with the jobseeker a realistic labour market goal, which may be supplementary employment, training, stabilisation of existing employment (especially for those on social assistance) or an alternative to regular employment for those with little chance of finding employment in the next 12 months (e.g. workfare). The agreed goal will be revisited in all subsequent client interviews; any changes are documented in VerBIS.

Selection of intervention strategy

On the basis of the strengths and deficits identified in profiling and the reintegration goal, a concrete action plan is agreed with the client. Based on his or her ‘gaps’ (Handlungsbedarf) the placement software (Verbis) suggests a number of very general and more or less self-evident ‘service strategies’ (Handlungsstrategien) and for each a number of concrete strategy options and the steps and timeframe that they entail in terms of the counselling process. A ‘product catalogue’ provides guidelines for job counsellors on what labour market programmes are recommended for each service strategy. Again, the responsibility lies with the individual job counsellor or case manager to decide which programme(s) the client should follow.

Integration agreement, Implementation and monitoring

The integration plan agreed between the job counsellor and the jobseeker is given written form in a formal agreement signed by both the jobseeker and the placement counsellor. Consecutively, the software prompts a search for job openings based on the results of the profiling (see Sections 3.1 and 3.2). The interview ends with the documentation of the results in the client’s electronic file, which is generated semi-automatically based on the previous entries during the course of the interview but can be amended or supplemented before storing.

Follow-on interviews with the same client are likewise structured by the VerBIS software with several core elements: 1) controlling adherence to the integration agreement; 2) re-examination of the profiling, goal, and choice of strategy, which are amended as necessary; 3) discussion of job search activity; 4) agreement on next steps and on the date for the next interview. Whereas there was previously a central norm for the frequency of contact with clients, this is now at the discretion of the local agency or Jobcentre and the job counsellor; administered and recorded with the support of VerBIS¹¹.

¹⁰ This occurs not infrequently in case of personal or family problems that may not entered into administrative records without the client’s permission (e.g. alcohol, drug or psychological problems).

¹¹ Cf. ‘Reform of placement services.’ Peer Review on “Systematic Preventive Integration Approach (Support) for Jobseekers and Unemployed” Germany, 28-29 October. A paper submitted by Hugh Mosley in consortium with GHK Consulting Ltd and CERGE-EI. Available online: http://www.mutual-learning-employment.net/uploads/ModuleXtender/PeerReviews/84/Host_Country_Paper_Germany_Final_circulated13Sep.pdf

4 Implementation, monitoring and further development

4.1 Resources (human and financial) required

The project 'Virtual Labour Market' was developed and implemented from 2003-2006. Up to 250 persons were involved in the project. However, their engagement ranged from a phase of 2-3 weeks or several months, to the complete duration of the project. The administration and further development of the system is implemented by 5-6 persons. Furthermore, there are around 20 persons engaged in user support (telephone and online support).

The project cost around EUR 165 million (initial development costs).

4.2 Training needs

Since all counsellors and advisors had already undergone extensive training related to the previous PES system of electronic data management and job-placement (7-8 days), the training of staff for VerBIS did not have to start from scratch.

The VLM project management had foreseen three days of training for all staff members on average. This assumption proved to be realistic, although it was slightly adjusted according to the role of staff members and the extent to which they will use VerBIS:

- Counsellors in the field of counselling job-ready clients or clients with minor deficits received 2.5 days of training;
- Counsellors in the field of counselling clients with special needs received 2.5 days + 2 hours of training;
- Members of the employers' services received 2 days of training.

All groups went through additional training sessions of several hours after a few months of practice. This second training phase was dedicated to practical questions and issues that arose while applying the platform.

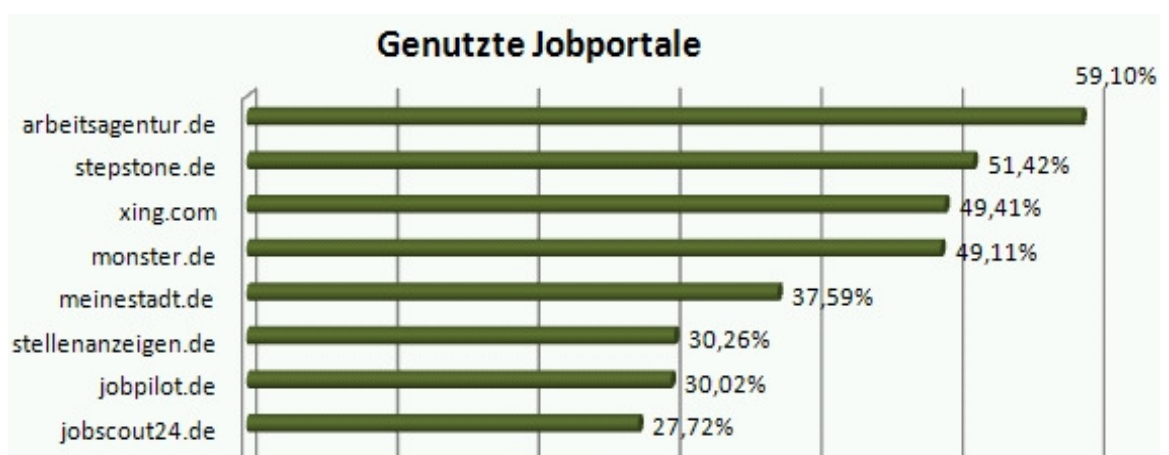
The training was conducted by internal trainers in regional training centres.

4.3 Monitoring and evaluation

External evaluation data proved that soon after its launch in 2006, Jobboerse became the market leader in the field of online job portals. With 18,500 new registered job-seekers and 1,600 new registered companies per week, in 2011 it is still the most popular job portal in Germany.

The picture below compares the user data between different popular online job-portals in Germany. It shows that Jobboerse is used by 59.1 % of job-seekers using online job-portals for job search (multiple answers possible).

Picture 4.1: Frequented Online Job-Portals



Source: *PROFILO Social Media- und Jobportalstudie 2011*¹²

Internally, the PES continuously monitors and evaluates the VLM in relation to two areas:

- Technical efficiency (server management, server downtime, technical issues);
- Utilisation and functionality (number of job profiles, number of accounts, reported vacancies etc.).

The internal monitoring shows that Jobboerse and VerBIS contain up to 3.8 million applicant profiles¹³, while the number of job vacancies available on Jobboerse and VerBIS is up to 1.1 million.

Table 4.1 The Virtual Labour Market in figures

User data	JOBBÖERSE	VerBIS	Job-Robot
Number of job vacancies and applicant profiles	~1.1m job vacancies, 3.8m applicant profiles		~250,000 job vacancies
Number of users per day	up to 1m	100,000	100,000
Page views per day	up to 19m	38m	10,000

Source: *Presentation by Michael Adam, BA*

Since all relevant client data is recorded in the platform, VerBIS itself is utilised as a monitoring instrument. It allows the number of successful placements, the number of client contacts, duration of counselling sessions and the waiting time until a counsellor is available for interview/counselling to be evaluated, in order to improve client services.

Surveys among the different user groups yielded a high level of satisfaction among clients (jobseekers and employers) and a medium level of satisfaction among staff. It was found that specific functions of the system (especially the case management function) had to be amended. New tools had to be developed to improve the user-friendliness and enhance acceptance among staff. In a first survey after the release, staff satisfaction was rated at 3 (satisfactory) on a scale of 1 (very good) to 6 (not good at all). In later ratings, a better result was achieved (2 (good) on the same scale).

The staff satisfaction surveys are also used to monitor users' problems with the different functions and applications of the platforms. To be able to respond in as target-oriented a manner as possible, the surveys are conducted with regard to the specific role of the different user groups and the field and scope of application.

4.4 Challenges

It has been pointed out that the development and implementation phase of VLM was temporally and contextually linked to a structural and legal reform of the labour market in Germany. This link posed a considerable challenge to the project management and turned VLM into a highly prestigious project.

¹² Cited after Michael Adam (BA). presentation.

¹³ The official report of the federal PES in Germany reports a unemployment rate of 5.073.000 persons for the month of November 2011. 'Der Arbeits- und Ausbildungsmarkt in Deutschland. Monatsbericht.' Bundesagentur fuer Arbeit, Nuernberg. November 2011

Available online: <http://statistik.arbeitsagentur.de/Statischer-Content/Arbeitsmarktberichte/Monatsbericht-Arbeits-Ausbildungsmarkt-Deutschland/Monatsberichte/Generische-Publikationen/Monatsbericht-201111.pdf>

Regarding the content and design of the platform, the continuous necessity for amendments linked to structural changes implemented during the running of the project required flexible reactions and close coordination between all levels of development.

The high costs of the platform triggered broad criticism; added value and benefits of the new tool were highly doubted; a heated public debate emerged which is to be seen in the context of general scepticism related to the structural reform.

However, after the implementation, the platform quickly found acceptance and is now widely appreciated.

4.5 Next steps

Five years after its implementation, Jobboerse and VerBIS were redesigned and further developed.

The second release in 2009 contained advanced features for jobseekers and companies:

- A multilingual user interface in five languages;
- Application templates;
- The transmission of applications via Email;
- Campaign management for fairs and exhibitions;
- Advanced full-text search (e.g. AND-, OR-, NOT-operators);
- Advanced messaging component (e.g. sent messages, folders, and attachments).

The e-services functions are being further developed. The aim is to provide the option to register and submit applications for specific services online. Furthermore, the idea of implementing functions of the VLM into social media (newsgroups, elements of counselling, training resources etc.) is currently being explored.

Besides that, the different interfaces for the different user groups are continuously updated and improved according to users' demands.

5 Potential for transferability

Public administrations and PES exchange experiences across Europe. Due to the range of the project and its prominence, VLM and VerBIS have generated much attention and interest in neighbouring countries and other European Member States. In general, the platform is based on a series of online-processes that are feasible in every European country. Merging different areas of work within an administration, creating more transparency between different sections of client services or linking supply and demand by matching clients' personal profiles and competences with job vacancies, are functions that are in no way specific to the German market. Limitations in transferability might occur with regard to the following issues:

Country specific rules of data protection:

The scope of access to the collected client data needs to be aligned with specific country rules and legal demands. Since Germany applies very restrictive rules of data protection, the scope of data accessibility by different users groups underlies specific regulations connected to the legal practice. Personal data of the jobseeker are only accessible for those user groups that need to work with them (for registration, grant of benefits etc.). Other countries might have different demands.

Country specific catalogue of qualifications –description of learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and competences):

One function of the profiling, especially for groups with gaps in qualifications or other disadvantages on the labour market, is to find ways and means to also capture those competences or learning outcomes of the client that are not obviously documented by an acquired qualification or certificate. Informal and non-formal learning might also lead to competences that add to clients' chances on the labour market. Jobboerse and VerBIS are connected to a database that contains a catalogue of more than 300 'vocations' from the field of Vocational Education and Training. Besides comparing the profile of the client with this catalogue of qualifications, the platform also looks for possible matches between knowledge, skills and competences that are acquired by different learning pathways and/or previous work experience. Since every country works with a specific qualifications framework, the method of matching qualifications and learning outcomes with vacancies and labour market demands needs to be country-specific.

Country-specific culture of counselling:

In Germany, face-to-face meetings and a confident personal relation between counsellor and client are very much seen as necessary conditions for high quality counselling – especially when clients with special needs are concerned. Consequently, the allocation of a steady personal contact person for all clients with more difficult profiles was an integral component of the PES-restructuring process. Online counselling in chat-rooms or video-sessions designed for interviews between client and counsellor have never been envisaged as part of the VLM. However, in other countries, a Virtual Labour Market might be conceived differently and might be extended to also comprise these functions.

Contacts

Zentrale der Bundesagentur für Arbeit

Mr Michael Adam (VerBIS)
michael.adam@arbeitsagentur.de

ANNEXES

Annex 1 List of sources

A1.1 Interviewees:

Michael Adam, Michael Adam, Team SP III 4; Business Processes/Technical Architecture/JOBBOERSE - Business Unit Product Development/Public Unemployment Insurance, interview conducted by GHK on 12 December 2011.

A1.2 Other sources:

- 1) Adam, Michael: Virtual Labour Market. Overview of Jobboerse and VerBIS. Bundesagentur fuer Arbeit.
- 2) Bundesagentur fuer Arbeit: Der Arbeits- und Ausbildungsmarkt in Deutschland. Monatsbericht. Nuernberg. November 2011
Available online: <http://statistik.arbeitsagentur.de/Statischer-Content/Arbeitsmarktberichte/Monatsbericht-Arbeits-Ausbildungsmarkt-Deutschland/Monatsberichte/Generische-Publikationen/Monatsbericht-201111.pdf>
- 3) Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs: Reform of placement services. Peer Review on "Systematic Preventive Integration Approach (Support) for Jobseekers and Unemployed". Official paper prepared by host country for peer reviewing event in October 2010.
Available online: http://www.mutual-learning-employment.net/uploads/ModuleXtender/PeerReviews/84/Official_paper-Germany.pdf
- 4) Ochs, Peter / Institut fuer Sozialforschung und Sozialwirtschaft e.V.: Evaluation der Maßnahmen zur Umsetzung der Vorschläge der Hartz-Kommission. Arbeitspaket 2: Umbau der BA. Evaluationsbericht 2006 im Auftrag des Bundesministeriums für Arbeit und Soziales (BMAS), Berlin. Saarbrücken 2006.
Available online: http://www.iso-institut.de/download/2007_01_16_iso-ochs-Bericht_BAEval_%20AP2.pdf
- 5) Mosley, Hugh in consortium with GHK Consulting Ltd and CERGE-EI: Reform of placement services. Peer Review on "Systematic Preventive Integration Approach (Support) for Jobseekers and Unemployed" Germany, 28-29 October.
Available online: http://www.mutual-learning-employment.net/uploads/ModuleXtender/PeerReviews/84/Host_Country_Paper_Germany_Final_circulated13Sep.pdf
- 6) WCC/Accenture: Case Study, Bundesagentur für Arbeit.
Available online: http://wcc-group.com/document.aspx?menu=solutions_004&page=download_document&id=95364904