



BELGIUM
Region of Flanders

TO FOSTER EVIDENCE-BASED DECISION MAKING, VDAB CREATED A SET OF DIGITAL DASHBOARDS WITH PERFORMANCE INDICATORS ENABLING MANAGEMENT TO FOCUS ON THEIR SPECIFIC PERFORMANCE.

“Digital performance dashboards”

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- ▶ To facilitate the effective use of data, a set of performance indicators that represent efforts delivered by staff at different organisational levels have been developed. They help to keep track of the VDAB’s contribution to outcomes (societal goals, strategic ambitions). For the elaboration of the performance indicators input from all layers of management was collected to make sure all perspectives are united.
- ▶ Digital dashboards can be an important instrument in evidence-based decision making when backed by coaching, training and management support.
- ▶ At VDAB, the set of performance indicators is used at various levels of management to foster transparency in decision-making.
- ▶ Even so, general adoption of the use of numerical insights in decision-making remains a continuous challenge. Not everyone is equally keen on figures and not every question is easily answered with available data from registers.

Name of the PES	VDAB
When was the practice implemented? (including start and end date for pilot projects)	The basic dashboard was introduced in the Spring of 2019, but extensions and further improvements are ongoing.
What was the driver for introducing the practice? Was it internal or external?	It was internal, linked to the ambition to deepen the evidence-based nature of decision making at VDAB.
Which organisation was involved in its implementation?	VDAB
Which groups were targeted by the practice?	The primary target audience of the digital dashboards are all lay-ers of management at VDAB: from team leaders at local offices to the CEO. Additionally, the dashboards are accessible to all VDAB staff to make sure that everyone can have a look at the performance figures.
What were the practice’s main objectives?	The dashboards are elaborated to give every decision-maker ac-cess to the current state of affairs of VDAB performance and ena-ble these decision-makers to derive insights from the numerical data (i.e. information based on data).
What activities were carried out?	The following activities were carried out: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a set of about 70 performance indicators for the or-ganisation that reflect the service delivery process from the beginning to the end (from the viewpoint of the client, “cus-tomer journey”). 2. Elaborate on a set of digital dashboards: team monitoring with the IT department. 3. Communicate about the dashboards and their intention (presentations in meetings at all levels of management).

	<p>4. Implement a support structure consisting of training (written and video) and individualised coaching (at different regional levels).</p> <p>5. Install a “feedback council” to capture suggestions for improvement and extensions (as VDAB and its policy measures change continuously, the set of performance indicators needs to be adapted continuously as well).</p> <p>6. Elaborate short analyses (written notes) on the basis of the performance indicators to foster the use of the figures in decision-making at various levels of the organisation. Every note presents an example of an insight provided by the data. The notes are distributed electronically to a list of subscribers and announced in a general newsletter of VDAB</p>
<p>What resources and other relevant organisational aspects were involved?</p>	<p>We use a digital reporting tool (MicroStrategy) for which at the Head Office the Monitoring Team (1.5 FTE) and the Information and Technology Team (1 FTE) are responsible in cooperation with colleagues from VDAB’s provincial offices.</p>
<p>What were the source(s) of funding?</p>	<p>Funding of VDAB</p>
<p>What were the outputs of the practice: people reached and products?</p>	<p>At first, VDAB introduced two dashboards, one on jobseekers and one on employers (vacancies). These dashboards present detailed figures at the local level and for each team at VDABs’ local offices. Secondly, VDAB extended the offer with two additional dashboards that allow team leaders to see how the figures of their team relate to individual records (of jobseekers or employers) and compare outcomes of single counsellors. For privacy reasons, access to these dashboards is restricted. More recently, more synthetic dashboards were developed to present a subset of the indicators and provide a quick overview to top management, the board of directors and the Minister of Labour.</p>
<p>What outcomes have been identified?</p>	<p>At various levels of decision making, the figures are put to good use.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The set of indicators is used to define a set of “team goals”, performance indicators that guide team leaders and middle management to steer their activities (not on a daily but e.g. on a quarterly basis). ▶ In the top layers of management, the figures are used for follow-up on a monthly basis and to redirect policy measures (or change orientations). ▶ A quarterly synthesis of the performance indicators is presented to the board of directors and the Minister of Labour to inform them of the state of affairs at VDAB. Evidently, this synthesis provides insights that foster policy discussions.
<p>What are the lessons learnt and success factors?</p>	<p>The development of indicators requires good knowledge of the current practice and profound dialogue with team leaders and middle management on valid measurements (How to represent actual efforts correctly?). Likewise, dialogue with top management is needed to incorporate a strategic view on crucial performance elements. A continuous effort to inform all involved layers of the organisation about the value of the performance indicators is required. Moreover, actual insights cannot be taken for granted. Offering interactive digital dashboards does not safeguard proper insights. Even simple tables and graphs do not represent insights to most users. Coaching, training and examples of interpretation are definitely required.</p>



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