



## BELGIUM

# “CareerFlow” and “Doorstart”-avoiding job immobility by proactive work-to-work transitions

STRATEGIES FOR AVOIDING UNEMPLOYMENT OR KEEPING THE PERIOD OF INACTIVITY AS SHORT AS POSSIBLE ARE DEVELOPED AND IMPLEMENTED BY INCREASING KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE CONDITIONS THAT STIMULATE OR HINDER PROACTIVE JOB-TO-JOB TRANSITIONS (CAREERFLOW) AND BY DIRECTLY SUPPORTING EMPLOYEES IN THE FIRST STAGES OF COLLECTIVE DISMISSAL (DOORSTART).

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The “CareerFlow” pilot project investigates which conditions (e.g. legal, motivational, financial) have an influence on job-to-job transitions in a situation of potential dismissal of employees (excluding collective dismissals).

The “Doorstart” pilot project supports future redundant employees in the first stages of a collective dismissal in changing to a positive mindset and looking for new job opportunities to keep the period of inactivity as short as possible.

Name of the PES

VDAB (the Public Employment Service of Flanders).

Scope of measure (a pilot project or a national reform)

Pilot projects in the Region of Flanders.

When was the practice implemented? (including start and end date for pilot projects)

“CareerFlow” was implemented from 1 April 2021 to 30 June 2022, while “Doorstart” was carried out between 1 October 2020 and 30 September 2022.

What was the driver for introducing the practice? Was it internal or external?

Following the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent (temporary) sectoral stand-still, there was a new need for labour market mobility, supported by recovery programmes funded by State and Region. Structural factors in the economy that are partly attributable to increased digitalisation and the increased investment in renewable resources caused (and continue to cause) the shrinkage or even disappearance of certain sectors and professions while other sectors and professions face an increased demand for workforce. Not all citizens and employees are equally able to find suitable solutions for their careers due to a very dynamic labour market and a rapidly changing ecosystem with a variety of public and private facilitators. This is the situation where a programme for “avoiding job immobility by proactive job-to-job transitions” wants to improve suitable support for smooth job-to-job transitions.

Which organisation was involved in its implementation?

- ▶ For “CareerFlow”, the VDAB had a leading role and 14 public and private partners (among others trade unions, employers’ organisations, a university and a service designer) contributed with their unique expertise in the field.
- ▶ For “Doorstart”, the Trade Unions had a leading role and worked, jointly with the VDAB, with employers and their HR management.

Which groups were targeted by the practice?

- ▶ “CareerFlow” is grounded on evidence from analysis in 8 company-centred cases. The results are used to identify factors facilitating or hindering job-to-job transitions and to develop strategies for avoiding unemployment of workers who are at risk of being dismissed. Therefore, the latter are the target group of this pilot project.
- ▶ “Doorstart” targets each year twelve companies and their employees, giving special attention to older workers. In the pilot phase, the project only targets larger companies within the network of Trade Unions.

What were the practice’s main objectives?

The main objective is to avoid unemployment or to keep the period of inactivity after dismissal as short as possible.

<p>What activities were carried out?</p>	<p>“CareerFlow” includes a case-centred research project with inter-institutionally staffed teams for each case (including for example representatives of the PES, employer and employee organisations) and a post-trajectory fundamental research project by a university.</p> <p>“Doorstart” offered workshops tailored to the company and its employees on financial questions, (re) orientation, applications for jobs, regional job perspectives and stress management. Special sessions were offered for older workers on their social rights and obligations. Furthermore, individual guidance was offered to employees and the whole company is offered guidance to outplacement processes.</p> <p>On basis of the “CareerFlow” pilot project results, the Government of Flanders used the experiences for a new project with a more structural approach to work-to-work transitions with the aim of creating broad partnerships that focus on transitions across companies. This also includes creating and strengthening “transition one-stop-shops”.</p>
<p>What resources and other relevant organisational aspects were involved?</p>	<p>“CareerFlow”:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Policy advisors and account managers at VDAB</li> <li>▶ Trade unions and employers’ organisations</li> <li>▶ HR service providers</li> <li>▶ Knowledge organisations.</li> </ul> <p>“Doorstart”:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ 3 trade unions</li> <li>▶ Policy advisors and SIA (social intervention account managers) at VDAB.</li> </ul>
<p>What were the source(s) of funding?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ “CareerFlow”: ESF, Flanders and VDAB</li> <li>▶ “Doorstart”: ESF, Flanders.</li> </ul>
<p>What were the outputs of the practice: people reached and products?</p>	<p>“CareerFlow”:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Around 30 enterprises and 200 employees were reached</li> <li>▶ Research report on feasibility, scope and conditions of work-to-work transitions.</li> </ul> <p>“Doorstart”:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ 25 companies received counselling (coaching of company and individual coaching).</li> </ul>
<p>What outcomes have been identified?</p>	<p>“CareerFlow”:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Realisation of 15 job-to-job transitions</li> <li>▶ Mindset switch of enterprises and employees with regard to proactive thinking about career paths</li> <li>▶ Broad cooperation of different socio-economic partners is important for detecting and identifying staff allocation.</li> </ul> <p>“Doorstart”:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Employees are better informed (with regard to their career path).</li> <li>▶ Increased employability of employees.</li> </ul>
<p>What are the lessons learnt and success factors?</p>	<p>“CareerFlow”:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ There is a real demand in SMEs for different variants of pooling, i.e. different legal and organisational arrangements for sharing employees.</li> <li>▶ Transitions are an interesting option for companies considering strategic adjustments, for example the discontinuation or the renewal of specific economic activities (due to market changes) which may result in the disappearance of existing jobs or the drastic change of job contents.</li> <li>▶ The transition model may play a role in the re-entry of workers who are on long-term sick leave.</li> <li>▶ Enabling factors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Importance of an HR policy already in place in the company</li> <li>▶ Introducing transition plans requires support among all stakeholders in and around the company</li> <li>▶ To get employees on board: preservation of employment conditions and temporary reversibility are important.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▶ Based on the experiences and results, VDAB will set up a number of transition one-stop-shops in broad partnerships to further explore this approach.</li> </ul> <p>“Doorstart”:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ There is a need for a finer selection of employees that can benefit from the approach and for more individual coaching to increase the effect on job-to-job transitions.</li> </ul>



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