Key figures
2018
The VDAB* mediates between job seekers and employers

*Flemish Service for Employment and Vocational Training

It is one of our core assignments. And we achieve it with a realistic view of the current labour market. This is why we are now giving you a glimpse into the world of ‘VDAB’, or the labour market data, within which we fulfill our duties.

In 2018 we received a total of 2,079,349 vacancies (Mastervac and all acquired databases, including temporary employment contracts). This is an increase of 32.6% compared to 2017. The number of vacancies began to rise four years ago, and this growth continues today. The record high of 2017 was again broken in 2018.

In 2018, the youth unemployment rate in Flanders fell by an average of 9.3%. The unemployment rate for young people was on average 14.1% in Flanders in 2018. In 2017 youth unemployment was on average 15.6%. Unemployment thus decreased considerably more in 2018 than in 2017. In that period, the average decrease in Flanders was only 6.8%. The main stumbling blocks are still those of building up work experience and finding sustainable work.

The Youth Work Plan (YWP) is designed to offer young people a personalised programme within four months of registration. It focuses on all job-seekers under 25 who have recently become unemployed or left school.

Digital access

In 2018 the digital job-application desk handled 9,882 requests. The desk gives everyone an opportunity to ask the e-coaches for feedback or help with a job application. This online service is provided by e-mail, chat or video chat. A registration or a file with VDAB is not necessary. The only requirement is that you have access to internet. We also received 625 applications via the digital job-seekers’ counter.

On average, 38,478 individual visitors per day go to vdab.be. This is an increase compared to last year. About half of the visitors consulted our website via a smartphone or tablet (48%). In addition, we counted 555,443 customer contacts via 0800 30 700. This is a 12% rise.
Unemployed job seekers
younger than 25

- Number flowed in: 76,560
- Number flowed out: 48,596

- 63.5% of the number flowed in
- 54.6% of the number flowed out

Unemployed job seekers
from 25-54

- Number flowed in: 134,964
- Number flowed out: 74,463

- 53.2% of the number flowed in
- 56.6% of the number flowed out

Unemployed job seekers
+ 55

- Number flowed in: 14,586
- Number flowed out: 4,081

- 28% of the number flowed in
- 66.56% of the number flowed out

3 months after competency enhancing actions: completed training courses

- Completed training courses: 14,119
- Number flowed out to work: 9,398

54.6% of which 177,602 belongs to at least one of the four traditional disadvantaged groups.

56.6% of which 193,123 belongs to at least one of the four traditional disadvantaged groups.

Classic disadvantaged groups are those with low education levels, people with indication of disability, the elderly (55+) and people with a migration background.
Outflow into work

Vacancies
The vacancy fill rate or share of filled vacancies (reported directly to VDAB, shared administration) was 70.9% in 2018. In absolute figures this means 62,682 vacancies filled compared to a total of 88,378 vacancies processed.

Our offering
VDAB helps coordinate supply and demand on the Flemish labour market. Employers can count on high-quality basic services. For this, we offer an optimal mix of channels. Employers have the following options via Mastervac:

- Registering their vacancies online and publishing them on the VDAB website.
- Going in search of suitable candidates in the CV database.
- Monitoring and managing their vacancies and providing feedback on candidates’ applications.

Opleidingen
We offer courses for job-seekers who would like to refresh their skills or want to pursue a new career.

In 2018, a total of 29,925 trainees attended 41,304 training courses. 77.85% were satisfied with our courses. A fine score, but we have set high standards and our objective is 85%.

2,785 Training campaigns
The infrastructure of our skill centres is open, free of charge, to pupils in the final year of secondary education.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Satisfaction</th>
<th>83.4%</th>
<th>59.6%</th>
<th>60.4%</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employer satisfaction about provided information</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>84.8%</td>
<td>83.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employer satisfaction about vacancy operations</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>63.2%</td>
<td>59.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMEs satisfaction about vacancy operations</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>61.2%</td>
<td>60.4%</td>
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<tr>
<th>Training campaigns</th>
<th>2,785</th>
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<tr>
<td>Training hours</td>
<td>57,191</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Number of completed courses</th>
<th>Individual students</th>
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<tr>
<td>General labor market competencies</td>
<td>7,501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction and wood</td>
<td>3,180</td>
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<tr>
<td>Business support, retail and IT</td>
<td>5,344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services to individuals and companies</td>
<td>3,659</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target group specific development processes</td>
<td>2,941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry</td>
<td>5,812</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transport and logistics</td>
<td>5,336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare and education</td>
<td>7,531</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>41,304</td>
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Workplace learning
Workplace learning is a collective term for skill-strengthening courses whereby some or all of the training takes place on the shop floor. This true-to-life context makes the acquired skills more relevant and more efficient and increases the outflow of job-seekers.

Our offer of training courses also occupies a central position. Even more than in the past, the focus is now on a labour-market-driven, flexible and future-oriented training offer.

70.74% of participants found work within 3 months of finishing a workplace learning course. The outflow of participants without following a workplace learning course was 59.51%. Yet another reason for us to use workplace learning with greater frequency and flexibility.

Intensive services
We continue to help job-seekers who have difficulties on the labour market with our specialised services, with intensive coaching and mediation to a job. We always do this in keeping with the job-seeker’s individual circumstances.

Stress, fear, pain, depression, chronic fatigue, alcohol dependency and other complaints can mean that someone will no longer be able to work. In addition, these are problems that you often cannot solve by yourself. In such cases, VDAB makes extra efforts with regard to job mediation. These job-seekers can turn to an appropriate assistance offer, such as activation guidance or employment care.

Activation Guidance
In an activation process, job-seekers get the chance to tackle their problems with a mediator and assistant from the care/welfare sector. The barriers to paid work are gradually removed by interviews (free of charge) with a doctor, therapist, or care provider and the steady build-up of skills in an activation traineeship.

During the first half of 2018, 559 job-seekers were guided to the activation care 3 tender. From July 2018, the VDAB - in collaboration with the department of Welfare and Public Health - launched a new tender to further extend and strengthen this offer of activation pathways. During the first project period, which runs until 31 December 2019, VDAB can supervise 1,750 job seekers.
Looking for workers outside Flanders and international cooperation

The close proximity of the surrounding regions presents a number of opportunities. Synerjob, the association of Belgian public employment services and vocational courses, was set up in 2007 to promote interregional collaboration. Synerjob is a partnership between bodies including the VDAB, Le FOREM and Actiris, whose members try to create added value through a variety of projects and campaigns.

Wallonia
Specialised employment mediators from the VDAB and Le FOREM began to co-operate along the language border, in the interests of interregional mobility. They provide employment services and organise job dating and job hunting sessions.

What does that mean in 2018?
Walloon job-seekers were offered 4,038 validated Flemish jobs of which 6,758 Walloon job-seekers were mobilised by Le FOREM. In addition, VDAB and Le FOREM organised job-datings at which Flemish employers and Walloon job-seekers could get to know each other. At least 25,268 Walloon job-seekers found a job in Flanders in 2018, with the aid of automatic exchange of job vacancies, spontaneous job applications and joint campaigns.

Brussels
In 2018 VDAB passed on 3,701 different job vacancies to Actiris, covering some 5,774 jobs or locations. 2,294 vacancies are interim, good for 3,244 jobs. For this, Actiris mobilised a total of 26,986 job seekers in Brussels. They were invited, informed, screened, prepared and supervised. This is an increase compared to last year. At least 10,323 Brussels job-seekers found a job in Flanders in 2018, with the aid of automatic exchange of job vacancies, spontaneous job applications and joint campaigns.

Europe
VDAB is a member of the cross-border EURES-partnerships. These are partnerships between the public employment services, employers’ organisations, trade unions and local authorities from all over Europe intended to improve cross-border labour mobility. That helps to fill structural bottleneck vacancies in Flanders with applicants from European countries with a labour market surplus. We organise job fairs, job-datings and individual mediation. In practical terms, this is about jobs for engineers, computer technicians and nurses, which we in Flanders cannot fill in the short or medium term with candidates from our own employment reserves or those of Brussels or Wallonia. But it also involves finding jobs abroad for (mostly young) Flemish job-seekers. The VDAB has been able to fill 1,185 vacancies through these services since May 2012.

Worldwide
The presidency of the European Network of PES
VDAB is part of the PES network, just like all other Belgian employment services. The PES network was founded in 2014 with a European decision. Its purpose is to promote cooperation between the European “public employment services”. This network replaces the informal advisory group that has been active since 1997. The “PES Bench Learning System” is the core of the activities of the network. Bench learning is a combination of benchmarking and Mutual learning that should help the PES to meet the challenges in the labour market. We exchange good practices to raise the quality of the services provided to job-seekers and employers. The network also gives advice to national and European policy-makers by developing and evaluating labour market policy. The CEOs of the network meet twice a year; Fons Leroy was re-elected president of the network in June for a second term.
Wapes

Mediation services combine their knowledge and expertise in WAPES (World Association of Public Employment Services). VDAB is also an active member. WAPES is the only global network where experts on public employment exchange, inter alia, good practices. Nearly one hundred public employment services are members of WAPES, which has located its secretariat in Brussels. WAPES combines the knowledge of 1 million employees from countries with an unemployment rate of 2% to 80%. Through benchmarking within and between the various parts of the world, WAPES provides valuable input in the field of employment, migration and education.

Our co-workers

The VDAB is a female-friendly environment, and the figures prove it. No less than 72.38% of the VDAB staff are women and 55% of the executive management positions are occupied by women. A result to be proud of. In other words, we have exceeded the target of 40% female managers set by the Diversity Policy Unit.

Inspection Policy

In 2018, 13,359 sanctions were imposed (12,135 within control department + 1,224 final appointments with the mediator). In addition, within the mediation and inspection process 21,849 VDAB notifications (signals) were once more issued with regard to the job-seekers whose search behaviour was insufficient. With 35,208 sanctions and signals, this is 17% higher than in the previous year. It is remarkable that the number of signals has increased significantly, which indicates a more consistent monitoring of the mediation process, in which the step to the inspection authority can, in certain cases, be avoided and not result in a sanction. Here is undoubtedly room for growth in monitoring the job-seeking behaviour.

In 2018 the number of sanctions was slightly lower than in 2017 but this has to do with a ruling of the Court of Appeal of Antwerp, Hasselt division, of 11/10/18. The inspection authority has had to revise 797 penalties as a result of this ruling to ‘without consequences’. Otherwise the total number would have been 14,156. In addition, an estimated minimum of 1,360 penalties were lost by the fact that the incoming transmissions were impacted by the ruling. This means a loss of at least 2,157 penalties which would have led to an increase of approximately 10%, instead of a decrease compared to 2017.