

# **Meerjarenplan Steunpunt Werk en Sociale Economie**

**Promotor-coördinator: Prof. Dr. Luc Sels**

Publicatiedatum: 14/12/2011

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Leading promoter

The leading promoter of the consortium is Prof. dr. Luc Sels. Luc Sels is Dean of the Faculty of Business and Economics at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven and full professor in the Research Centre for Organisation Studies of the same Faculty. Since 2006 he is leading promoter of the Policy Research Centre Work and Social Economy (WSE).

## 1.2 Participating research groups

The Policy Research Centre Work & Social Economy will be supported by a consortium consisting of the following institutions/research groups (with indication of the chief responsible academics):

- Katholieke Universiteit Leuven
  - Faculty of Business and Economics: Prof. Dr. Luc Sels
  - Research Institute for Work and Society (HIVA): Dr. Caroline Gijssels
- University College Lessius (associated with Faculty of Business and Economics, K.U.Leuven)
  - Department of Business Administration: Prof. Dr. Anneleen Forrier
- University of Antwerp
  - Faculty of Social and Political Sciences: Prof. Dr. Dimitri Mortelmans
- Antwerp Management School
  - Prof. Dr. Ans De Vos
- University of Ghent
  - Faculty of Economics and Business Administration (Sherppa): Prof. Dr. Bart Cockx
- University College Ghent (associated with the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, University of Ghent)
  - Department of Management and Organisation: Prof. Dr. Nathalie Moray
- Partnerships with other Policy Research Centres:
  - Educational and School Careers (prof. dr. Ides Nicaise, K.U.Leuven): development of a joint master plan for linked datasets on educational and labour market careers
  - Regional Economy and Entrepreneurship (prof. dr. Joep Konings, K.U.Leuven): exchange and joint acquisition of datasets and co-operation in research on regional job creation and regional labour market dynamics (see Annex I, Agreement between ORE and WSE).
  - Poverty and Social Exclusion (prof. dr. Daniëlle Dierckx, UA), more in particular with work package 10 'Empowerment and participation' (prof. dr. Tine Van Regenmortel, K.U.Leuven)

Research on work, labour market and social economy strongly requires a multidisciplinary input. The main disciplines contributing to labour market research are represented in the consortium, though with a strong emphasis on economics and sociology. The consortium represents a mix of experts in the field of fundamental labour market research and experts acknowledged for the quality of their policy-oriented research and their direct or indirect influence on labour market policy. Various promoters combine both types of research, therefore allowing both depth and relevance to go hand in hand.

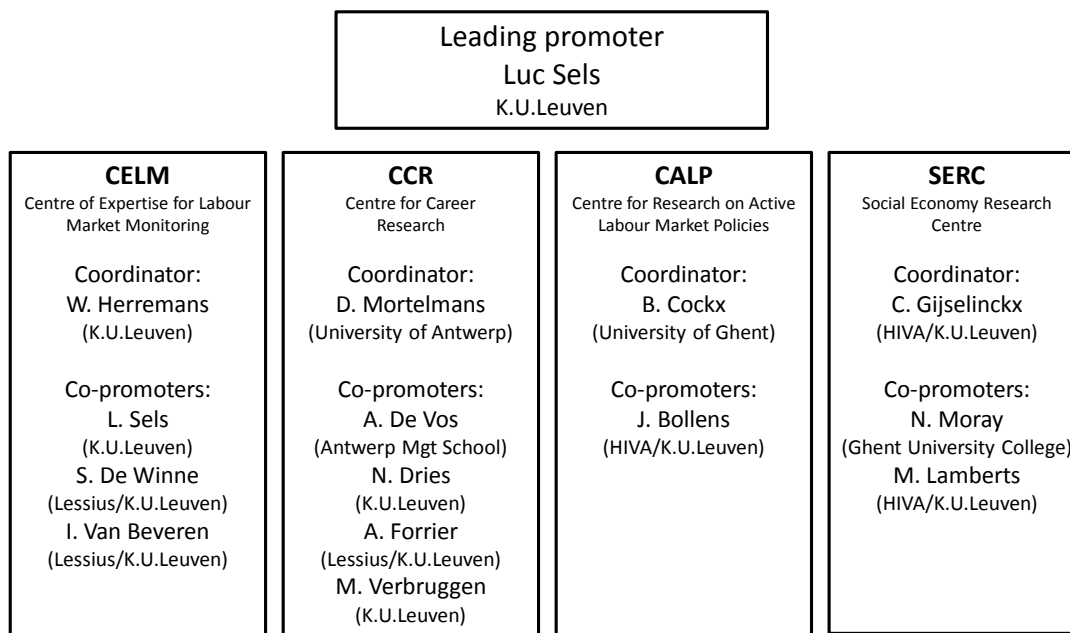
The university faculties stand for a strong tradition in fundamental research whereas the Research Institute for Work and Society (HIVA) and the Antwerp Management School are more renowned for applied and policy-oriented research and a strong link to respectively employees' organisations and the

business world (which also allows for a balanced involvement of all stakeholders). But irrespective of a more fundamental or a more policy-oriented focus, we assure that each WSE research group has built up a nationally as well as an internationally acknowledged expertise in its field of study.

For more details concerning the collaboration between the participating research groups, we refer to the Agreement of Cooperation (Samenwerkingsovereenkomst, in Dutch).

### 1.3 Structure of the Policy Research Centre Work and Social Economy

Taking into account the recommendations from the external assessors and the new tasks as presented in the call for proposals, we organise the new Policy Research Centre WSE in four units: (1) CELM: Centre of Expertise for Labour Market Monitoring, (2) CCR: Centre for Career Research, (3) CALP: Centre for Research on Active Labour Market Policies, (4) SERC: Social Economy Research Centre. The new structure is depicted in the following diagram.



**CELM:** The Centre of Expertise for Labour Market Monitoring will consolidate the activities of the previous Data Development Unit. The main tasks are: collecting, cleaning and analysing available labour market data for policy purposes, further developing the Flemish Labour Account and the strategic scoreboards on the Flemish labour market, projecting activity and employment rates, methodologically supporting the VLAMT project (Flemish Labour Market Research for the Future), monitoring the job market and benchmarking of the Flemish labour market performance in a European perspective. The CELM is also the hub for labour market information in Flanders, will further develop its interactive

website and continue its journal *Over.Werk*. The CELM will operate in close collaboration with the Department Work and Social Economy of the Ministry of the Flemish Community.

**CCR:** The Centre for Career Research is dedicated to the study of career transitions, with particular attention to research on the transitions from job to job (labour mobility), on job search behavior and job search success, on flexible job search behavior and career re-orientation. The CCR will also study the determinants of (early) exit or career withdrawal intentions and behaviors in the late career. The primary focus will be on the analysis of the antecedents of career transitions (from work to work, unemployment to work, work to early retirement, career breaks, etc.) and of their effects on objective and subjective career success; the design of intervention models that may support successful career transitions; and the formulation of policy-oriented recommendations (e.g. supporting the extension of the active career (active ageing), the shift from 'job security' to 'career security', and the implementation of a protected mobility or flexicurity paradigm).

**CALP:** The Centre for Research on Active Labour Market Policies will focus on measuring the net effectiveness of several active labour market policy measures. Its research agenda centres on analyzing the efficiency and effectiveness of active labour market policies or so-called 'activation instruments' (e.g. the 'sluitend maatpak' or 'fitting suit'-approach of the Flemish Employment Service, the expansion of mandatory activation to unemployed 50 and older, the effect of wage subsidies and instruments oriented towards social integration of people employed in the social economy, etc). This includes special attention to the integration of vulnerable groups and to the transition from unemployment to employment, but there is also room for research into the effects of career interventions that support labour mobility. Whereas the focus of CCR is on studying transitions, their antecedents and effects, the CALP research programme centres on interventions and their net effectiveness.

**SERC:** The Social Economy Research Centre will elaborate the monitoring system concerning the social economy. In comparison with the activities of the previous Policy Research Centre, the SERC will focus on an assessment of the multiple values created by social and regular enterprises, and the empowerment created through social entrepreneurship. Instruments/scales for the measurement of empowerment processes and outcomes on different levels (individual, organisational, community) will be developed. The focus will be on the empowerment of communities through social enterprises. Policy recommendations will also be developed to inspire policies that aim to empower social enterprises, communities and individuals in their efforts to answer to societal challenges. SERC will also analyse job creation opportunities for target group workers in the regular economy.

#### **1.4 Organization chart**

The main principles are explained below. A number of organizational aspects will be more extensively treated in the management section (part 3).

1. **Leading promoter.** The WSE policy research centre will be led by Prof. Dr. Luc Sels (Faculty of Business and Economics, K.U.Leuven). The leading promoter will hold final responsibility and will be the main contact person for the coordinators of the four centres, the participating universities and

institutes (e.g. issues regarding location of WSE) and the principal financing authority and functional ministers. The leading promoter will also represent the Policy Research Centre WSE in the Steering Committee Strategic Labour Market Research. He will be responsible for the operational management and the general co-ordination of the Policy Research Centre WSE as well as its relationship with other Policy Research Centres. The leading promoter will get assistance from the coordinator of the Centre of Expertise for Labour Market Monitoring, Wim Herremans, and one administrative staff member.

2. **Four centres.** The Policy Research Centre WSE will consist of four centres: (1) CELM: Centre of Expertise for Labour Market Monitoring, (2) CCR: Centre for Career Research, (3) CALP: Centre for Research on Active Labour Market Policies, (4) SERC: Social Economy Research Centre. Each of the four centres will be led by one coordinator: CELM by Wim Herremans (Faculty of Business and Economics, K.U.Leuven), CCR by Dimitri Mortelmans (Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, University of Antwerp), CALP by Bart Cockx (Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, University of Ghent) and SERC by Caroline Gijssels (Research Institute for Work and Society (HIVA), K.U.Leuven). Each coordinator is assisted by one or more co-promoters (and several scientific staff members). By adding the co-promoters or senior experts, the multi-disciplinary character of each Centre is guaranteed and the WSE Policy Research Centre is prevented from becoming balkanized. The senior experts will be in charge of specific research projects in their Centre and will monitor the scientific quality. They report to the coordinator.
3. **Management board.** The coordinators of the four centres will each take on academic responsibility for their centre. Together with the leading promoter, they will form the management board of the Policy Research Centre Work & Social Economy which initially will meet on a bi-monthly basis (a frequency to be reduced later on). The management board will have the following responsibilities: (1) coordinating the activities of the four centres; (2) annually outlining the research programmes of the respective WSE centres; (3) budgetary control and budget allocation; (4) fine-tuning the annual budgets; (5) validating all types of both financial and research reporting to the principal financing authorities; (6) planning joint publications and WSE products; (7) organizing the quality management within the WSE Policy Research Centre.
4. **Feedback to and from the principal financing authorities.** The formal communication with the ministerial cabinets, the Department Work and Social Economy and the Flemish social partners will take place within the Steering Committee Strategic Labour Market Research of which the WSE leading promoter and the coordinator of CELM will be a member. The Steering Committee will assess the relevance for labour market policy and approve the outline of the research programmes of the Policy Research Centre WSE. The Steering Committee will suggest adjustments where necessary. The Steering Committee will furthermore be regularly informed about the progress of the WSE research activities. At each meeting of the Steering Committee (four meetings a year) one WSE Centre will present its research plan and progress.

5. **Pivotal role of the CELM.** The Centre of Expertise for Labour Market Monitoring will remain the central unit of the Policy Research Centre Work and Social Economy. All CELM researchers will have their office in the ‘headquarter’ of WSE. As approved by the vice-rector of the Group Humanities of K.U.Leuven, the Policy Research Centre WSE can stay at the current location. As in the past, the CELM will manage, develop and make available several datasets, e.g. Labour Market and Social Protection Datawarehouse, Labour Force Survey, all datasets feeding the integrated labour account, the Social Security data, etc. Given its expertise in use and interpretation of these datasets, the CELM will supply the necessary and relevant data to each of the other three Centres.

## 1.5 WSE products

The journal of the Policy Research Centre WSE (Over.Werk) will be continued and plays an important role in establishing networks between labour market researchers from different universities, institutes and public agencies. Over.Werk will also be used as a channel for publishing WSE output. The WSE research results will be complemented by commentary articles of involved policy actors.

The output of the CELM, based on its monitoring activities, will be, as much as possible, communicated through the WSE website ([www.steunpuntwse.be](http://www.steunpuntwse.be)). However, before updating specific sections of our website, we will assess the complementarity with the interactive labour market information web portal of the Department WSE. Yet, we aim at a more extensive alignment of the statistics section of our website with this web portal. In addition, the e-zines and regular communication of Labour Market Flashes will also be continued and new communication tools of the website will be explored.

For the content development and publishing of the WSE journal, E-zines, labour market flashes and updates of the topical sections of the website, prior approval by the authorized minister is not required. These publications are especially relevant for topical issues and the publication of the journal is strictly bound by the timetable of the publisher (ACCO). However, the thematic sections of the journal can be determined in consultation with the Steering Committee, which allows for a matching to the current policy agenda.

To communicate research results and policy viewpoints, the Policy Research Centre WSE will start up its own publishing series of WSE reports, which will be made public through the website. Furthermore, an annual WSE Conference will be organised covering one of the core issues of the WSE research programme.



## 2. Work packages

### 2.1 Main objectives

In developing this multiannual programme, we started from the objectives that were specified in the call for proposals. This way we aim to optimally align the research activities planned by the consortium with the research and information needs of the public authorities and social partners. All objectives and assignments that were pointed out in the call for proposals are at least partially covered in the multiannual research programme of the consortium. In the following table we indicate which of the four WSE Centres will be responsible for the respective objectives and assignments listed in the call for proposal.

	CELM	CCR	CALP	SERC
<b>Unit data: labour market monitoring</b>				
Flemish labour account	X			
Monitoring social economy				X
Development strategic scoreboards	X			
Forecasting employment rates	X			
Hub for labour market information	X			
Policy evaluation	X		X	
<b>Labour market of the future</b>				
Job creation opportunities in the regular economy	X			
Job creation opportunities for target group workers				X
Methodological support of skill forecasting	X			
Diagnosis of the job market, hard-to-fill vacancies	X			
<b>Transitional careers</b>				
Job-to-job transitions		X		
Re-orientation of job seekers, search behaviour		X		
Late-career challenges, working longer		X		
Reintegration of groups at risk, social integration			X	X
Transition from job security to career security		X		
Effectiveness of ALMPs			X	
Effectiveness of career support instruments			X	
Impact of competency development			X	

<b>Benchmarking of labour market performance</b>				
Benchmarking regional labour markets	X	X		
Research into inter-regional labour markets	X			
Research into (inter)sectoral labour markets	X			
<b>Surplus value of the social economy</b>				
Assessment of the multiple values created by the social economy				X
Community empowerment through social entrepreneurship				X

The CELM will operate in a strong symbiosis with the monitoring unit and thematic experts of the Department WSE of the Ministry of the Flemish Community. This symbiosis will translate in active collaboration in labour market monitoring and in the agenda setting (problem identification) and policy formulation stages of the policy cycle, as well as in co-authoring of WSE reports and policy reports. This model of cooperation, coordination and joint planning of research and monitoring will considerably increase the flexibility on both sides.

## 2.2 Transversal themes

As mentioned above, each of the four WSE centres will study the Flemish labour market from their own perspective and in the context of their respective areas of expertise. Yet, some research themes will be studied transversally across the different work packages and WSE centres. In particular, the labour market position of women and vulnerable groups is included in the multiannual programmes of the four WSE centres. The transversal attention to these themes is justified because of low employment rates of specific categories (e.g. 55+, migrants) and the persistence of employment gaps (e.g. related to nationality) or divergent labour market outcomes (e.g. wage gap). In order to achieve the general employment rate target (76% 20-64) by 2020, all population groups should be activated and integrated into the labour market. Flemish policy notes also mention growth paths for specific target groups (e.g. the EU 2020 employment targets, the Pact 2020). Encouraging active ageing and labour market participation of vulnerable groups is especially relevant to the Flemish political and research agenda.

The following table presents an overview of work packages in which specific attention is paid to the situation of target groups or to transversal topics such as gender equality and active ageing.

<b>WSE Centre_WP</b>	<b>Transversal theme</b>	<b>Approach / research questions</b>
CELM_WP1. Flemish labour accounts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Active ageing</li> <li>- Gender equality</li> <li>- Target groups</li> </ul>	Gender, age, nationality and origin are key dimensions in the integrated labour market

		statistics model for Flanders
CELM_WP2. Thematic scorecards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Active ageing</li> <li>- Gender equality</li> <li>- Target groups</li> </ul>	Monitoring labour market position of women and disadvantage groups (low-skilled, migrants, persons with a disability), with particular attention to the 55+ (end-of-career) and the youngsters (education – labour market transition)
CELM_WP4. Labour market projections and prospective research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Active ageing</li> <li>- Gender equality</li> </ul>	Projected impact of population ageing and increasing participation of women on the employment rate; simulation of replacement demand related to retirement
CALP_WP1. A simple monitoring instrument for the effectiveness of active labour market policies (ALMP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Active ageing</li> <li>- Gender equality</li> <li>- Target groups</li> </ul>	To verify whether a policy is more or less effective for certain target groups, by interacting a participation indicator with individual characteristics of the unemployed worker (gender, level of education, nationality, etc.)
CALP_WP3. Encouraging active ageing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Active ageing</li> </ul>	Evaluation of a given wage subsidy for workers of 57 and above
CCR_WP2. Employability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Active ageing</li> </ul>	The impact of employability enhancing activities, perceived employability and job satisfaction, on (1) the intention to retire early, (2) behaviors signaling early retirement and (3) actual early retirement
CCR_WP3. Self-directedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Active ageing</li> <li>- Gender equality</li> </ul>	Impact of self-directedness on work-life balance and retirement intentions / decisions
CCR_WP5. The work-life balance and household influences on career decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Gender equality</li> </ul>	The influence of gender and gender-related variables on the relationship between transitional careers and work-family balance.
CCR_WP6. Part-time employment at the end of the working career as a predictor of retirement behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Active ageing</li> </ul>	Indirect and direct effect of part-time versus full-time work on the planned or actual retirement age.
CCR_WP7. An international comparison of career transitionality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Active ageing</li> <li>- Gender equality</li> </ul>	Compare individuals in both sexes in different career pattern groups for family variables (marital stability, children), career success indicators, as

patterns: the interplay of gender, career outcomes and covariates		well as career overall length (years gainfully employed) and retirement age.
SERC_WP3. Analyses of job creation opportunities for target group workers	- Target groups	Research on strategies to improve the integration of target group workers in the regular labor market

Beside the research on transversal themes within the Policy Research Centre WSE, we will also organize cross-links and partnerships with other policy research centres that cover adjacent research themes.

- The Policy Research Centre Educational and School Careers for the development of an integrated strategic scorecard on the school to work transition and a joint master plan for linked datasets on educational and labour market careers
- The Policy Research Centre Regional Economy and Entrepreneurship for the exchange and joint acquisition of datasets and co-operation in research on regional job creation and regional labour market dynamics.
- The Policy Research Centre on Poverty and Social Exclusion for co-operation in research on empowerment and participation.

Furthermore, some of the promoters of the Policy Research Centre WSE participate in other policy research centres. These connections provide for a thematic and operational interplay between the different operating policy research centres.

- Luc Sels (WSE\_CELM): co-promoter Policy Research Centre Regional Economy and Entrepreneurship and member of the Expert Committee of the Policy Research Centre Integration
- Dimitri Mortelmans (WSE\_CCR): co-promoter Policy Research Centre on Equal Opportunities

Active collaboration and synergy is foreseen between Caroline Gijssels (WSE\_SERC) and Tine Van Regenmortel (Policy Research Centre on Poverty and Social Exclusion) with respect to the theory and methodology behind the analysis of community empowerment via social entrepreneurship.

### 2.3 Responsiveness to new policy topics

Additional short-term questions or ad hoc assignments that are not currently specified in the call will be responded to in several ways.

First, the CELM will take charge of labour market monitoring as a key priority. In the multiannual schedule it is elaborated in general terms on an aggregate level. In consultation with the Steering Committee for Strategic Labour Market Research and the Department WSE of the Flemish Government, monitoring priorities (e.g. for the labour accounts) and the selection of specific topics (e.g. for the

thematic scorecards) will be set each year in the detailed yearly schedules. This process allows for a more flexible steering of the work packages towards actual policy needs. Furthermore, CELM will also be responsible for the so-called *WSE hotline*. This role involves the prompt delivery to external users of factual data about the labour market. The CELM targets to maintain a similarly high service level as in previous years. The same holds for the supply of statistical labour market information for policy discussions or papers. In connection with a topical debate or specific policy discussion (such as the evaluation of activation for those aged 50+, the EU 2020 strategy indicator set, VLAMT, etc.), the CELM can offer support with the gathering of specific information and the setting up of targeted indicators. Such assignments go beyond the simple delivery of statistical material in the context of the labour market information hotline. On each occasion it will be necessary to consider together the impact of such ad hoc assignments on current activities.

Second, the Policy Research Centre WSE has always had a strong *policy focus* and has permanently been involved with the planning of government policy. The new consortium regards responding to short-term questions from the ministerial cabinet and administration as a core assignment.

Third, the *Steering Committee* (in which also the social partners are involved) will act as a particularly important sounding board (as was the case in the past). At each meeting of the Steering Committee (four meetings per year) we will present the progress in one specific WSE Centre's research programme. This will allow the members of the Steering Committee to make an active contribution in directing the WSE work packages.

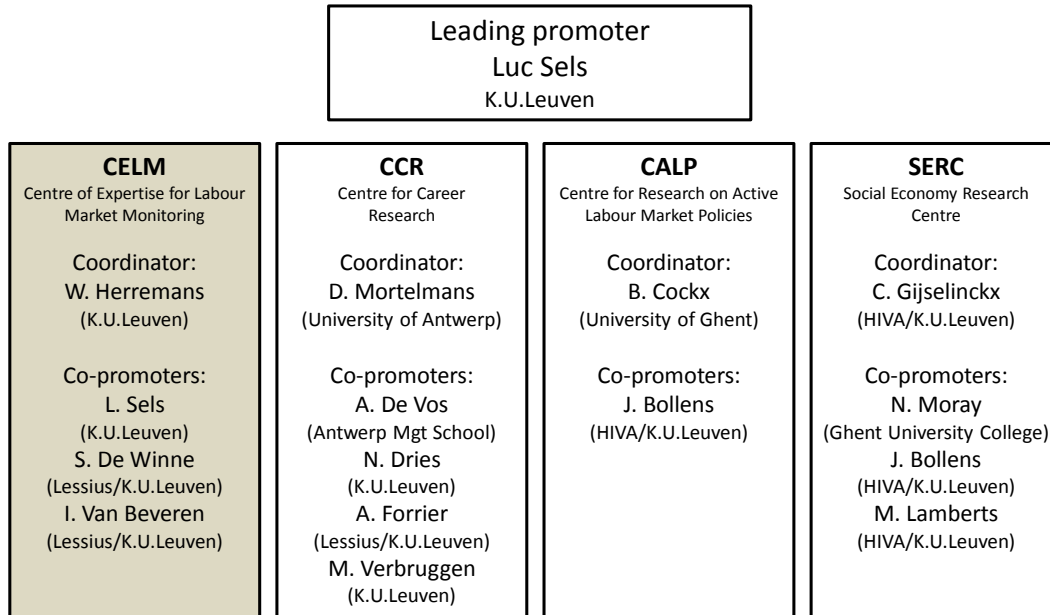
Fourth, we plea for a continuation of the *layered follow-up model* that is currently in place. While the Steering Committee is focused mainly on the strategic direction (annual plan, budget, orientation of work packages) of the Policy Research Centre, the operational follow-up is organised through the so-called thematic workgroups. These thematic workgroups provide feedback on WSE reports and other publications and are the ideal platform for in-depth debate between public authorities, social partners, thematic experts and WSE promoters and researchers. This active involvement of all relevant stakeholders in the follow-up process enhances the Policy Research Centre's responsiveness to new policy topics.

## **2.4 Multiannual programmes WSE Research Centres**

We introduce the four Centres' multiannual programmes in the following order:

- A. CELM – Centre of Expertise for Labour Market Monitoring
- B. CCR – Centre for Career Research
- C. CALP – Centre for Research on Active Labour Market Policies
- D. SERC – Social Economy Research Centre

## A. CELM – Centre of Expertise for Labour Market Monitoring



### Introduction and core tasks

At the European Summit in Lisbon in 2000, a new frame of reference was created for monitoring the European employment policy. Since then, labour market performance in the European Union and its member states has been systematically monitored and assessed by means of reciprocal benchmarking and measurement against concrete target values. The EU 2020 strategy for more employment, higher productivity and greater social cohesion builds further on this and sets five core objectives (including an employment rate of 75% for the 20-64 years-old<sup>1</sup>) which should be translated by individual member states into national objectives, taking the specific situation and circumstances into account.

Flanders has also adopted this frame of reference. Concrete employment targets are set with a time horizon of 2020 (cf. Flanders in Action, the Pact 2020 and the Flemish EU 2020 Reform Programme) and objective tools for labour market monitoring are becoming increasingly important.

For a number of years now, first at the Resource Centre for Labour Market Research (Steunpunt Werkgelegenheid, Arbeid en Vorming) and after that at the Policy Research Centre Work and Social Economy (henceforth the 'Policy Research Centre WSE'), the requisite expertise has been built in the use of databases with relevance to labour market policy and the development of monitoring tools. With the Centre of Expertise for Labour Market Monitoring of the Policy Research Centre WSE, we will build further on this wealth of experience during the period 2012-2015, so as to ensure that objective and

<sup>1</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/targets/eu-targets/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/targets/eu-targets/index_en.htm)

validated labour market figures are available on an on-going basis in support of Flemish labour market policy and as input for the general social debate.

The carefully accumulated knowledge of the European, federal and Flemish labour market databases also forms the starting point for the further development and innovation of existing and new monitoring tools (e.g. for prospective labour market research). With these monitoring tools, we aim - systematically and continuously - to collect, analyse and report on policy-relevant data. However, the monitoring of labour market performance is not an end in itself. It is a means of periodically comparing labour market performance with set norms and social objectives and expectations, so that on this basis the policy of the government and the social partners can be (re)oriented wherever useful or necessary. This conversion of the data into future policy options is also something that the Policy Research Centre WSE seeks to incorporate in its work as emphatically as possible.

In order to fulfil this role, the Centre of Expertise for Labour Market Monitoring (CELM) of the Policy Research Centre WSE focuses on four core tasks:

1. **Labour market monitoring.** The updating (in conjunction with the Department Work and Social Economy of the Ministry of the Flemish Community – henceforth ‘the Department WSE’) of monitoring tools that were developed by the currently operating Policy Research Centre WSE (the Flemish labour account and thematic balanced scorecards) and the optimisation and renewal of the monitoring toolkit (by means of statistical exploration and the development of innovative indicators and labour market projections). For these tasks, our focus is on already available databases, so that the information that is present can be further exploited and access to databases which are currently underused in labour market research can be opened up further.

The labour market monitoring is a key priority for CELM. In the multiannual schedule it is elaborated in general terms on an aggregate level. In consultation with the Steering Committee for Strategic Labour Market Research and the Department WSE of the Flemish Government, monitoring priorities (e.g. for the labour accounts) and the selection of specific topics (e.g. for the thematic scorecards) will be set each year in the detailed yearly schedules. This process allows for a more flexible steering of the work packages towards actual policy needs (as requested in the assessment of the proposal). Thereby a workable balance needs to be sought between updating and maintaining existing monitoring tools on the one hand and developing and improving these tools on the other. The implementation of the integrated multiannual schedule therefore requires to take account of the desired priorities, the available resources per work package and the monitoring capacity of the Department WSE. Moreover, the same issue arises when developing new monitoring tools, which also require a commitment in terms of maintenance and on-going updating. Ultimately, it is therefore desirable to provide a more consistent basis for the maintenance and updating of the increasingly extensive and comprehensive monitoring tool set. This should create the opportunity to assign priority to innovations in labour market monitoring.

The continuation of the current partnership on labour market monitoring between CELM and the Department WSE is incorporated in the multiannual schedule. In this partnership the CELM prioritises its focus on (1) updating and extending the Flemish labour account and (2) innovating and developing new modules and monitoring tools; and the Department WSE organises the updates of the thematic labour market scorecards’ and follow-up measurements, with the support of CELM.

2. **Expertise development.** The further development of the existing centre of expertise in the use and interpretation of labour market data and databases, with special attention for quality control,

innovation, critical interpretation and reporting of the used methods and indicators. This centre of expertise serves not just institutional users, such as the government and the social partners, but also the scientific world.

3. **General and policy support.** Support for external users (policy actors, administrations, scientific institutions) in the search for the most appropriate labour market information and in the correct interpretation of that information; substantive and methodological support for the three other centres of the Policy Research Centre WSE (CCR, CALP and SERC) in opening up access to new and existing statistical sources and the development of indicators.
4. **Hub for labour market information.** Serving as a bridge between statistics providers, labour market researchers and policy actors.

The centralisation of these roles at the CELM makes it possible to build a strong relationship of trust with statistics providers, to bring uniformity to the use and interpretation of labour market information, to increase the quality of the available information and to make optimal use of statistical sources for labour market research and monitoring. Thus the central management of the labour market data delivers substantial efficiency gains with regard to the collection, management and opening up of access to the available information.

During the period of activity of the Policy Research Centre, the core tasks of the CELM will be operationalised by means of eight complementary work packages.

- WP1. Flemish labour account
  1. WP2. Thematic balanced scorecards
  2. WP3. Regional labour market performance
  3. WP4. Labour market projections and prospective research
  4. WP5. Data development
  5. WP6. Econometric analyses on administrative data
  6. WP7. Scientific service provision
  7. WP8. Networking and valorisation

In what follows, we will describe each of these work packages.

### **WP1. The Flemish labour account**

The Flemish labour account was developed by the Policy Research Centre WSE in the period 2007-2011. It is the first pillar of an integrated labour market statistics model for Flanders: a framework for integrating labour market statistics, containing an internally consistent estimate of core variables with regard to the labour market. In the Flemish labour account system, existing labour market information is integrated into a logical set of interlinked data integrated with clearly defined concepts and identity relations.

In the development of the Flemish labour account, considerable attention was paid to the model's quality dimensions and to the integration process. Eight quality criteria were proposed (see also Herremans, 2007): (1) an exhaustive approach, (2) alignment with internationally harmonised concepts (ILO and ESA), (3) maximum linkage with a federal concept of labour accounts, (4) mutual coherence of concepts, (5) durability, (6) use of validated databases, (7) optimisation of production time and (8) transparency.



The primary objective of the integration process is to provide an understanding of the Flemish, subregional and local labour markets in a systematic and integrated fashion. The development of the Flemish labour account was a priority role of the current Policy Research Centre WSE. The implementation of the basic model was almost entirely completed during the period 2007-2011. The Flemish labour account's completed components and dimensions are shown in the table below.

**Table 1** Components and dimensions of the Flemish labour account introduced in the period 2007-2011.

Population	Gender, age, place of residence, nationality
Inactive persons	Gender, age, place of residence, nationality
Economically active population	Gender, age, place of residence, nationality, socio-economic position
Unemployed persons	Gender, age, place of residence, nationality
Employed persons	Gender, age, place of residence, nationality, status, work regime, activity sector,
Domestic employment, in numbers of people	Gender, age, workplace, status, work regime, activity sector
Domestic employment, in labour volume	Gender, age, workplace, status, work regime, activity sector
Commuting statistics (salaried workers)	Gender, age, place of residence, workplace, activity sector
Jobs	Workplace, activity sector, status
Vacancies (Flemish Public Employment Service)	Main sector, requested educational level
Establishments with personnel	Size category, activity sector

Thanks to the integrated and consolidated character of the statistics, the Flemish labour account has developed during the lifetime of the current Policy Research Centre WSE into an important calibration point for labour market analyses at various different policy levels (local, subregional, Flemish, federal, European). Right down to local authority level, the Flemish labour account represents a crucial tool for benchmarking labour market performance. The calculation of the administrative rates of unemployment at the Flemish Public Employment Service (VDAB) is just one of the achievements that explain the need for the tool's continuation. For the calculation of the Flemish unemployment rate, VDAB compares the unemployed jobseekers from the administrative unemployment records with the economically active

population from the Flemish labour account. The availability of uniform data about the economically active population also makes it possible to provide further details about the unemployment rate right down to municipal level, analysed by gender and age. The importance of the Flemish labour account as a monitoring tool is also apparent from a selection of recurrent applications, which we list in the table below.

**Table 2** Selection of recurrent applications using the Flemish labour account.

<p><b><u>A. Flemish Government</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Department of Work and Social Economy (interactive module <a href="http://www.werk.be">www.werk.be</a>)</li> <li>• Research Centre of the Flemish Government (<a href="http://www.lokalestatieken.be">www.lokalestatieken.be</a>)</li> <li>• Flemish Agency for Local and Provincial Government and Research Centre of the Flemish Government (urban monitor <a href="http://www.thuisindestad.be">www.thuisindestad.be</a>)</li> <li>• Flemish Public Employment Service (VDAB) (unemployment rates <a href="http://arvastat.vdab.be/arvastat">http://arvastat.vdab.be/arvastat</a>)</li> <li>• Flemish Public Employment Service (VDAB) (local statistics <a href="http://wegwijs.vdab.be">http://wegwijs.vdab.be</a>)</li> <li>• Flemish Public Employment Service (VDAB) (RESOC datasheets and sector datasheets <a href="http://vdab.be/trends">http://vdab.be/trends</a>)</li> </ul> <p><b><u>B. Subregional and local governments</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional Socio-Economic Consultation Committees (RESOCs)</li> <li>• Provinces</li> <li>• Local governments</li> </ul> <p><b><u>C. Federal government - Eurostat</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Federal Public Service Economy – Eurostat (<a href="http://www.urbanaudit.org">http://www.urbanaudit.org</a>)</li> <li>• National Employment Service – Eurostat (regional unemployment rates)</li> <li>• <i>In preparation:</i> Federal Public Service Employment, Labour and Social Dialogue (WASO) – Coordination Unit of the Institute for National Accounts (INR), National Bank of Belgium (NBB), Federal Planning Bureau (FPB) (economically active population in the regions)</li> </ul> <p><b><u>D. Other regions</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walloon Institute for Assessment, Forecasting and Statistics (IWEPS) – Walloon Public Service for Employment and Training (FOREM) (economically active population in Wallonia)</li> <li>• Brussels Public Employment Service (Actiris) (economically active population in Brussels)</li> <li>• Arbeitsamt der Deutschsprachigen Gemeinschaft/Employment Office for the German-Speaking Community (ADG) (economically active population in the German-speaking Community)</li> </ul> <p><b><u>E. Other initiatives</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scientific research</li> <li>• NMBS (National Railway Company of Belgium), companies (commuting statistics)</li> <li>• Local intermunicipal bodies</li> <li>• Students</li> <li>• etc.</li> </ul>
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The Flemish labour account's data and integration process is an ongoing, but above all time-consuming task in which close attention is paid to dialogue with the statistics providers, improving and refining data requests and developing programs for the integration of the statistics – specifically, SAS syntaxes.

Moreover, the current Policy Research Centre WSE has produced extensive and detailed documentation on the integration process (methodological reports). This helps ensure the transparency of that process, and a manual is provided for the implementation of new updates and for their possible transfer to the Department WSE. At the start of the 2007-2011 period, provision was made for a transfer scenario in which the Department WSE would be responsible by the end of the period for the autonomous running of the Flemish labour account (and other monitoring tools). To make such a transfer possible, arrangements were made for intensive collaboration between the Policy Research Centre WSE and the Department WSE. Several employees of the Department WSE were also seconded on a part-time basis to the Policy Research Centre WSE. Thanks to this collaboration, effective knowledge transfer has been achieved for a significant proportion of the activities. With a view to the autonomous production of the Flemish labour account, the Department WSE became actively involved in all phases of the integration process, and various components were also actually implemented by the Department WSE.

However, the current personnel capacity of the monitoring unit of the Department WSE is too limited to combine the labour market monitoring as developed by the Policy Research Centre WSE with the further development and deployment of its own monitoring tools. From 2009 onwards, it was therefore decided after consultation to significantly slow down the transfer of monitoring activities. The intensive collaboration was continued, but the main burden of responsibility for running the Flemish labour account was again placed on the Policy Research Centre WSE. This is because each update of the labour account requires an in-depth analysis of the source files and of the methodological aspects which arise and for which scientific underpinning is required. This transfer of the responsibility to run the Flemish labour account to the Policy Research Centre WSE means that for the period 2012-2015 we need to ensure sufficient in-house capacity for the continuation of this monitoring tool which is so important at various policy levels.

For 2012-2015, we propose three concrete activities with respect to the Flemish labour account.

1. **Consolidation of the basic model.** The consolidation of the basic model is of the highest priority. We will therefore work to update the basic model and optimise the integration process (including shortening and controlling throughput times). In consultation with the Department WSE, a work allocation and updating schedule needs to be drawn up for the period 2012-2015. Preferably, the entire basic model will continue to be updated annually, although that is no easy matter given the required production capacity. The idea can therefore be considered of updating certain crucial components every year (including the estimation of the economically active population), but following a less intensive schedule for other components or subdivisions (e.g. labour volume, nationality, etc.).
2. **Harmonisation of federal and regional labour accounts.** A second activity involves the further alignment of the Flemish labour account with the estimation methods used at federal level and by the other regional governments. In consultation with the Federal Public Service Employment, Labour and Social Dialogue (FOD WASO), the Walloon Institute for Assessment, Forecasting and Statistics (IWEPS) and the Brussels Public Employment Service (ACTIRIS), the federal and regional labour accounts will be further harmonised. For the Flemish labour account, this means refining the applied methodology and extending the employed population to include categories which have not been integrated previously (including employment with international organisations, domestic help, undeclared work, etc.). Ideally, this dialogue will result in a completely harmonised methodology for

calculating both the federal and the regional labour accounts. Moreover, this process may contribute to the alignment of terms and definitions in the Flemish labour account with the internationally harmonised concepts agreed within the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and in the European System of Accounts (ESA).

3. **Extension modules.** A third activity relates to the extension of the basic model to include two proposed in-depth studies which are still under development: (1) the distribution of the population by socio-economic position and 'origin', by integrating new statistics on the country of birth extracted from the Labour Market & Social Protection Data Warehouse and (2) the alignment between the business establishments in the Flemish labour account and in the Enriched Crossroads Bank for Enterprises (VKBO). As the data for these in-depth studies are only expected to be available in the course of 2012, we will allow time in the new policy research centre's working period to examine the feasibility of these extensions more closely and implement them if appropriate.

We do not propose any new extensions, so as not to jeopardise the manageability of the tool. This is because we not only have to allow development time for new extensions, they also require a commitment in terms of maintenance and on-going updating. In view of the complexity of the integration process and the intensity of the updates, adding new modules to the Flemish labour account would considerably increase the required capacity and production time, at the expense of developments and innovations in other monitoring areas.

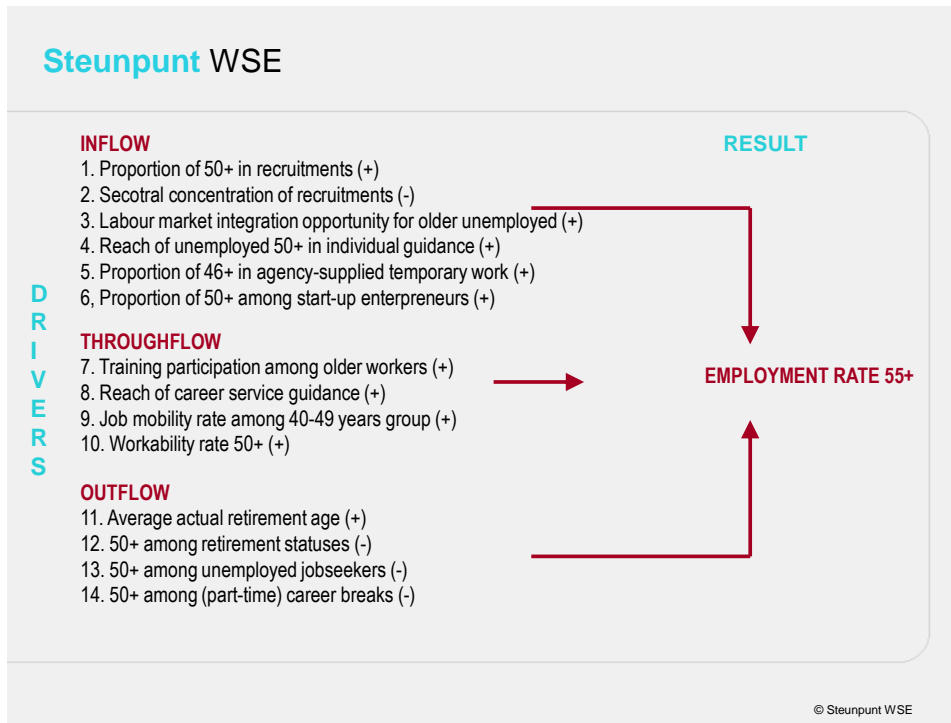
## **WP2. Thematic scorecards**

As the second pillar of the integrated labour market statistics model for Flanders, the Policy Research Centre WSE devised a series of thematic scorecards in the period 2007-2011 relating to current and strategic labour market themes. In a 'balanced' scorecard, the most important target and guideline figures with respect to a specific policy-relevant labour market theme are combined in a single diagram. Such indicators have usually been custom-designed and display a logical coherence in the context of the specific scorecard.

A scorecard indicates the main drivers that need to be activated in order to achieve priority policy goals (e.g. reducing unemployment among young people, increasing the employment rate among those aged 55+). For each of these drivers, the most suitable indicators are selected from the available administrative databases and from relevant surveys. For each indicator, "flashing lights" and time series indicate the extent of progress or deterioration and the impact on the overall policy goal. On this basis, policy priorities are identified with a view to the further development of the policy cycle. The main advantages of this way of working are the high degree of standardisation (through the use of a fixed set of indicators) and integration (through reducing the information from numerous sources and about a wide range of indicators to a single, internally consistent picture).

The design that has been worked out for the end-of-career scorecard, which combines the main drivers that affect the strategic goal of increasing the employment rate among those aged 55+, is given below by way of illustration.

**Figure 1.** End-of-career scorecard



Source: Policy Research Centre WSE

In the period 2007-2011 several balanced scorecards were devised, specifically around the following themes: (1) end- of-career policy and employment of those aged 50/55+, (2) the integration of young people in the labour market, (3) participation and investment in training by employees and employers, (4) intersectoral employee flows (at joint-committee level), (5) labour mobility on the Flemish labour market and (6) the overall development of the Flemish labour market (the so-called 'Flemish labour market trend report'). The Policy Research Centre WSE was responsible for the conceptual development of each balanced scorecard and its first use in practice. In the context of the transfer of labour market monitoring (see above), the follow-up measurements for a number of the balanced scorecards were performed by the Department WSE. A common data process was started up for this, and arrangements were made for the necessary knowledge transfer.

In the period 2012-2015 we will build further on the concept of thematic balanced scorecards. As with the Flemish labour account, we need to make agreements about a division of work between the Department WSE and the CELM that makes it possible firstly to continue updating the most crucial balanced scorecards and secondly to ensure new developments and innovations in order to meet specific research and policy requirements which are currently inadequately addressed. In the partnership model, the CELM primarily focuses on the development of extensions and new modules and the Department WSE looks after the balanced scorecard updates and follow-up measurements. In consultation with the Steering Committee for Strategic Labour Market Research and the Department WSE of the Flemish Government, priorities for the updates and the selection of new topics will be set each year in the detailed yearly schedules. However, given the objective of the thematic scorecards it is important to provide for recurrent updates. Below, we present a work scheme for the elaboration and continuation of some scorecards which are significantly relevant for the Flemish labour market policy.

1. **Flemish labour market trend report (trend analysis balanced scorecard).** In the Trend Report, using the main core figures, the performance of the Flemish labour market is closely monitored. With an annual or half-yearly update of the core figures, we keep our finger on the pulse and are able to detect shifting trends quickly. Particular attention is paid to the position of disadvantaged groups on the Flemish labour market (the low-skilled, older people, young people, people with non-EU nationality or origins, persons with a disability). The balanced scorecard consists of various components, including:
  - changes in economic conditions and the way they are reflected in a series of economically sensitive labour market indicators
  - changes in unemployment and labour market reintegration opportunities (among disadvantaged groups)
  - changes in the vacancy market, labour market shortages and the number and nature of 'bottleneck vacancies' (see also point 2)
  - changes in sectoral employment
  - changes in the employment rate (among disadvantaged groups) and achievements and expectations with respect to employment targets

For this thematic scorecard, it is especially important to provide for regular updates. Therefore, the core figures and main conclusions are reported every year in the Flemish labour market trend report. The balanced scorecard and the trend report are produced jointly by the CELM and the Department WSE.

2. **Scorecard on underutilized labour resources.** The Flemish government and social partners agreed in the Pact 2020 to stronger activate currently underutilized labour resources. Unemployment statistics and the unemployment rate are used to provide insights into the immediately available labour resources. Yet, it is recognised that the unemployment rate indicator can on its own no longer sufficiently describe the potential labour resources (Eurostat, 2011). With an increasingly fragmented and diversified labour market and strongly varying degrees of attachment to it, there are many persons who do not fulfil the criteria to be classified as unemployed. However, their situation often resembles that of unemployed persons and many of them even perceive themselves as unemployed. In this thematic scorecard we can introduce new indicators to supplement the Flemish unemployment rate and thus estimating the *potential labour resources* for Flanders in a more comprehensive manner. For this analysis we can rely on European definitions recently launched by Eurostat concerning underemployed part-time workers, persons seeking work but not immediately available and persons available for work but not seeking it. The 'underemployed part-time workers' covers persons who, although employed, have insufficient volume of work, and are in this respect similar to unemployed persons. The 'persons seeking work but not immediately available' consists mostly of people who do not qualify as unemployed because of their limited availability to start in a new job, despite their being jobseekers. The 'persons available to work but not seeking' consists of people wanting to work and available to do so, but who are not recorded as unemployed because they are not actively looking for a job. This includes, among others, discouraged jobseekers and persons prevented from seeking work by personal or family circumstances. The European definitions are very similar to the alternate measures of unemployment developed by the US Bureau of Labor Statistics (noted as indicators U1 to U6), with the U6-indicator as the most comprehensive measure of labour resource unemployment available. U6 is about total unemployed, plus all persons marginally attached to the labor force, plus total

employed part time for economic reasons, plus all persons marginally attached to the labour force ([www.bls.gov](http://www.bls.gov)).

3. **Scorecard on (bottleneck) vacancies and labour market shortages.** In the wake of the past economic crisis, we have been confronted on the Flemish labour market with a sharp rise in unemployment in combination with a persistently high level of labour market shortages and bottleneck occupations. Likewise, the purely quantitative shortages on the labour market seem increasingly persistent, regardless of the state of the economy (Herremans et al., 2011). These trends raise questions about the matching between supply and demand on the labour market, or questions about the quality of functioning of the labour market. With the Policy Research Centre WSE, we initiated a balanced scorecard for the Flemish vacancy market in the period 2007-2011 and conducted a first measurement of bottleneck vacancies. We can build further on this in the period 2012-2015. First, we will integrate the analyses of the vacancy market in a more structural fashion in the annual Flemish labour market trend report (see point 1). Second, it seems advisable, in consultation with the Flemish Public Employment Service (VDAB), to carry out further work on developing or refining the measurement of bottleneck vacancies. If these can be systematically charted, this information can be used together with indicators such as shortages and (long-term) unemployment to assess the functioning of the Flemish labour market more accurately. Third, we can also raise the prospect of the analysis of the vacancy survey of the Federal Public Service Economy. On the basis of a proposal by the Higher Council for Statistics, a quarterly survey among companies will be launched which meets Eurostat requirements in this area as well as the demand for regional vacancy data. The first results are expected in the course of 2012.
4. **End-of-career scorecard.** In the end-of-career scorecard, achievements are monitored with regard to the promotion of influx and limitation of outflows among those aged 50+ and 55+ on the Flemish labour market. Given the structurally low employment rate of those aged 50+ and especially those aged 55+ on the Flemish labour market, there is broad agreement about the strategic importance of this balanced scorecard. The Department WSE can be responsible for an annual or two-yearly update of the basic indicator set (as developed in the period 2007-2011). The CELM can take care of additional substantive clarification and identification of policy priorities. The CELM can also work to develop new indicators with regard to retirement age, retirement patterns, re-entry opportunities, career length and career structure. For these, we can use longitudinal data from the Labour Market & Social Protection Data Warehouse to monitor cohorts of working people over time. The longitudinal character of these data makes it possible to calculate the retirement age, but also to identify retirement patterns and monitor labour market reintegration opportunities. In connection with the integration of pension contribution record data in the Data Warehouse, we can also examine the possibilities for reconstructing the entire careers of new pensioners. This may offer new insights into the length and composition of careers at the time of retirement, and thus be particularly useful as input for the policy debate about pension contribution records and the discussion about the total extent of the so-called 'equivalent periods'. This aspect has so far remained greatly under-examined in analyses of and the debate about 'working longer', although the total labour volume during a person's career (even more than the employment rate) is decisive for the robustness of the social welfare system.
5. **Scorecard on young people in the labour market.** This scorecard is a tool for monitoring young people's entry into the labour market and their subsequent career (and as such forms a 'pendant' to the end-of-career scorecard; although for the purposes of monitoring the total labour volume it is also an important complement to it). This scorecard has been developed due to increasing concerns

about the labour market participation of those leaving compulsory education without any qualifications, frictions in the transition from education to the labour market, the persistently high rate of unemployment among school-leavers and the increasing contractual flexibility faced by young people in the first phase of their career. The scorecard contains components relating to the education-labour market transition, school-leavers' first job and its impact on their subsequent progress in the labour market. For this balanced scorecard too, the Department WSE can take care of the follow-up measurements using the already developed indicator set.

Furthermore, the CELM and the *Policy Research Centre Educational and School Careers* intend to join efforts in conducting an enlarged scorecard for the 'education – labour market transition'. This collaboration may result in the reorientation of the current scorecard, with its central focus on young people's labour market positions, to a broader interpretation in a common balanced scorecard for the 'education – labour market transition'. The Policy Research Centre Educational and School Careers could further develop the indicators about early school-leaving and school-to-work-transitions (e.g. horizontal and vertical mismatch), while the CELM could invest in indicators about employment careers (e.g. flexicurity aspects and upward mobility).

Another joint effort of the CELM and the Policy Research Centre Educational and School Careers will be the conduction of a feasibility study on a master plan for linking datasets on education and labour market careers. This study will be explained in WP4 – section 4.1.

6. **Training efforts scorecard.** The training efforts scorecard focuses on monitoring developments with regard to continuing training, training efforts and training investments. For this balanced scorecard, new indicators have been developed (including the regionalisation of social balance sheet data) to monitor European and Flemish goals in connection with training policy, including companies' spending on training (compared with a target of 1.9%). In the period 2007-2011, the Policy Research Centre WSE ensured the necessary knowledge transfer to the Department WSE for the autonomous performance of follow-up measurements. In the period 2012-2015, the Department WSE can continue to be responsible for an annual update of the key indicators from the scorecard. The CELM can further analyse the differences of the WSE-figures extracted from the 'social balances' with similar data of the National Bank of Belgium and the scorecard of the Central Economic Council. This can possibly result in an adjusted and more harmonised methodology for the adjustment and regionalisation of the social balances.
7. **Scorecard on sectoral labour markets.** The sectoral labour markets scorecard was developed to support Flemish sectoral labour market policy, with specific consideration of the sectoral agreements in which mutual undertakings between the sectors and the Flemish government are set out. This scorecard provides statistics and indicators for the analysis of sectoral performance per joint committee. In the period 2007-2011, The Policy Research Centre WSE ensured the necessary knowledge transfer to the Department WSE for the autonomous performance of follow-up measurements. In the period 2012-2015, the Department WSE can continue to be responsible for an annual update of the key indicators from the scorecard. At the CELM we can provide for an extension that focuses on a vulnerability analysis of the sectoral labour markets. This involves developing an indicator set to express the current and future vulnerability of the sectoral labour markets. Priority will be given here to the expected sectoral replacement demand (resulting from sectoral demographics, turnover and retirement patterns), to the implications that this has for the required level of inflow (from education and intersectoral mobility), and to developments in



bottleneck vacancies. We thus create new insights into trends on the sectoral submarkets and the impact of sectoral shifts on the labour market as a whole.

### **WP3. Comparing regional labour market performance**

With the Pact 2020, the Flemish government and the Flemish social partners aim to stimulate a social dynamic in favour of action and change, so that by 2020 Flanders will be among Europe's absolute leading regions in economic, ecological and social terms. However, on the basis of a comparison of the European regions' labour market performance (on the basis of a cluster analysis), we have found that the relative position of Flanders has not improved in recent years. On the contrary, the gap with nearby comparable European regions has in fact grown (Sels & De Winne, 2009). At the CELM we are planning a sequel to these comparative analyses. We will rely on two sets of techniques: (a) benchmarking and (b) multi-level institutional analysis.

#### *1. Benchmarking regional labour markets*

We will distinguish between three types of benchmarks. *Theoretical benchmarks* rely on academic criteria posited by a researcher on the basis of the relevant literature (e.g. zero long-term unemployment). *Best performance benchmarks* are based on best performance in the specific policy dimension, either within the EU or internationally (e.g. the 78,7% employment rate achieved in Sweden). *Institutional benchmarks* are specific targets or benchmarks for assessing performance set by governments, social partners, European Commission, etc. (e.g. the employment targets as defined in the Pact 2020). Finally, *process benchmarking* is the practice of comparing one's policies to European bests and/or the good/best practices from other regions (also referred to as best practice benchmarking). In the process of benchmarking, governments may identify the strongest regions in the European Union where similar policies exist (e.g. based on best performance or institutional benchmarks), and compare the institutional systems and policy choices of those studied to one's own processes.

In this work package, we will use best performance and institutional benchmarks as a basis for process benchmarking. Our focus will be on performance dimensions related to employment (e.g. employment rate), social inclusion, quality of work and talent (e.g. school drop-outs, investment in human capital).

First we will define the set of performance dimensions that we will include in our benchmarks of regional labour market performance. We will also select or develop the most appropriate benchmark indicators for these performance dimensions. Obvious indicators are the employment rate, employment growth, unemployment rate, long-term unemployment rate, age-related or gender gaps in employment or unemployment rates, youth unemployment, etc. However, this list of indicators represents merely one possible interpretation for this benchmarking analysis. Other combinations of indicators may be equally legitimate. For example, most performance dimensions used in benchmarking are static, while dynamic indicators may be more appropriate for an accurate assessment of (progress in) regional labour market performance. In addition, other goals not included here may be deemed equally or more important (e.g. integration of the disabled or ethnic minorities; separate benchmarking on late-career indicators such as activity rates, reemployment rates, early exit rates, ... among aged 50 plus). Finally, while most benchmark analyses abstain from any attempt at weighting (giving all policy objectives the same weight), we will explore the impact of assigning higher weights to more pivotal performance indicators on regions' relative position in terms of labour market performance.

Second, we will rely on two sets of techniques for the actual benchmarking exercise.

a/ **Radar charts.** Radar charts have four or more axes integrated into a single radial figure on which data for one or more countries or regions (cases) can be presented simultaneously. Radar charts are useful in particular for comparing performance on multiple dimensions simultaneously or for comparing cases with multiple performance dimensions. The figure formed by the axes of the radar chart provides not only a visual representation of performance, but its surface area can be used as a composite indicator of the level of overall achievement of goals that may be measured in different dimensions, instead of separate indicators for each goal (cf. the calculation of “surface measure of overall performance” or SMOP; Schütz, Speckesser & Schmid 1998) <sup>2</sup>.

b/ **Cluster analysis.** We will rely on cluster analysis to develop comprehensive regional profiles on several performance dimensions simultaneously. Clustering is the assignment of a set of observations (regions) into subsets (called clusters) so that observations in the same cluster are similar in some sense (i.e. regions within groups are similar in some respect and unlike those from other groups). These analyses will make it possible to identify the position of Flanders in a clear, nuanced manner compared with other European regions with regard to specific labour market themes (e.g. overall labour market performance, late-career labour market participation, participation of disadvantaged groups, etc.). Since clusters of regions are determined on the basis of several critical performance dimensions simultaneously, it allows to identify which European regions perform consistently high on a broad set of relevant benchmarking indicators.

Progress (of Flanders’ position) on the radar charts and in the cluster outcomes will be monitored bi-annually, starting in 2012.

Third, we will use the outcomes of the radar charts and cluster analyses to select regions for *process benchmarking*. Process benchmarking is aiming at a better understanding of how (in the regions belonging to the best performing cluster) regional labour market performance, social inclusion and equality are shaped by social institutions such as training systems, legal systems, political systems, educational systems, (active and passive) labour market policies, etc. In this context, we define institutions as being formal and informal rules, regulations, norms, and understandings that constrain and enable behaviour (e.g. Scott, 2008). The approach taken is comparative and the central comparisons made are those between the institutions governing top regions/countries and the Flemish/Belgian regulatory framework. Our main objective is to ‘contextualise’ differences in labour market performance. This is important because best performance benchmarks are often highly misleading because they are based on data that are easily available rather than on full research. We therefore believe it is important to go beyond pure ‘numbers-driven’ benchmarking. The contextualisation of benchmarking outcomes will allow us to understand more clearly a particular region/society and its labour market performance by distinguishing its particular institutional structures, how these link together, and the impact they have on firms and individuals’ behaviour on the labour market (see also Sorge & Maurice, 2000).

However, it will not be possible to engage in a comprehensive comparative institutional analysis within the available time frame. Given the limited resources and many priorities of the CELM, this best practice benchmarking will be focused on individual country/region cases and basically rely on secondary

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2 The SMOP is calculated simply on the basis of the mathematical formula for the area of the polygon. It yields an interval index measure of overall performance that can be used, for example, to rank performance of countries or to measure changes in performance over time. The maximum value of the indicator depends on the number of sides, assuming that the maximum benchmark value of “1” (or 100%) is achieved on all four performance dimensions. Thus a radar chart with four axes has a maximum SMOP of 2, an eight-sided figure a maximum SMOP of 2.83.

literature, country/regional reviews and expert opinions. The particular themes for this best practice benchmarking will be further specified in detail in discussion with the steering committee.

Bi-annually we will dedicate the plenary session of the yearly WSE Conference to the in-depth analysis of one or two regions/countries that are 'leading' the peloton in specific benchmarks (e.g. in terms of activity and employment rates among aged 50 plus, the activation of unemployed, the degree of social inclusion, etc.). At the occasion of the 2011 WSE Conference we started this series of country/regional institutional analyses with the cases of Germany and Sweden. The German case is related to its success in controlling the structural unemployment rate. The selection of the Swedish case was inspired by its announcement to target a 'well over 80%' employment target by 2020.

## 2. *Multilevel institutional analysis*

To support and guide our best practice benchmarking, we will at the same time study which factors influence the labour market behaviour through a multilevel research design. In 2012-13 we will focus on a multilevel analysis of the determinants of early exit from the labour market and the reemployment probability (i.e. returns from unemployment) of people aged 50 plus. In our multilevel framework we distinguish two levels of influencing factors: individual characteristics of older workers/job-seekers (e.g. career trajectory, educational level) and rules, regulations and norms that may impact (early) exit and reemployment. We will use the Labour Force Survey data, enriched with institutional data and macro-economic and social security indicators on the country level. This combination enables multi-level analyses whereby individuals are embedded in institutional contexts. In addition, we will explore the usefulness and utility of additional datasets such as the SHARELIFE (survey on health, ageing and retirement in Europe). We will also examine the inclusion of household characteristics as an additional 'intermediate' level (e.g. labour market position and income of the spouse, collective financial resources and financial responsibility towards children or other dependent people) influencing individual transitions and decisions. Household characteristics have an important influence on the decision process whether or not to leave the labour market (Henkens, 1998).

First, we study the influence of individual characteristics on labour market behaviour of people aged 50 plus. Previous research looked, among other things, at income, health, gender, educational level, the wish for more spare time, importance attached to social status, job satisfaction and the past labour market trajectory (see Hofäcker, 2010). Although most studies include similar variables, they do not reach unambiguous conclusions. A possible explanation for these inconsistent findings could be that individual characteristics may bring about different effects in other regions and countries. Therefore we will compare the effect of individual characteristics between different regions and countries.

Second, we study the effect of institutional characteristics. Based on several country specific studies, Guillemard (2003) concludes that institutional arrangements concerning welfare and employment very much affect how actors in the labour market behave with regard to age (see also Hofäcker (2010) for a comprehensive overview). Some countries ("early exit culture") focus on benefits for early exit from the labour force. Others ("active ageing culture") include several provisions for integrating or reintegrating older wage-earners into the world of work. Several studies link, at a macro-level, the institutional policies with specific labour market statistics (e.g. Burniaux et al., 2004). In this study, we take a step further by linking institutional policies to individual labour market trajectories.

We will collect per region and country information on a number of selected indicators in different domains: (a) active labour market policies, (b) passive labour market policies providing income replacement (e.g. degressivity of unemployment benefits, implicit tax on work at older ages, exit incentives through pension system and welfare-state subsystems), (c) dismissal protection and seniority

rules, (d) educational system/systems of vocational training. The multilevel model is used to compare the countries. In a two-level model, country variables will be replaced by the institutional variables.

#### **WP4. Labour market projections and prospective research**

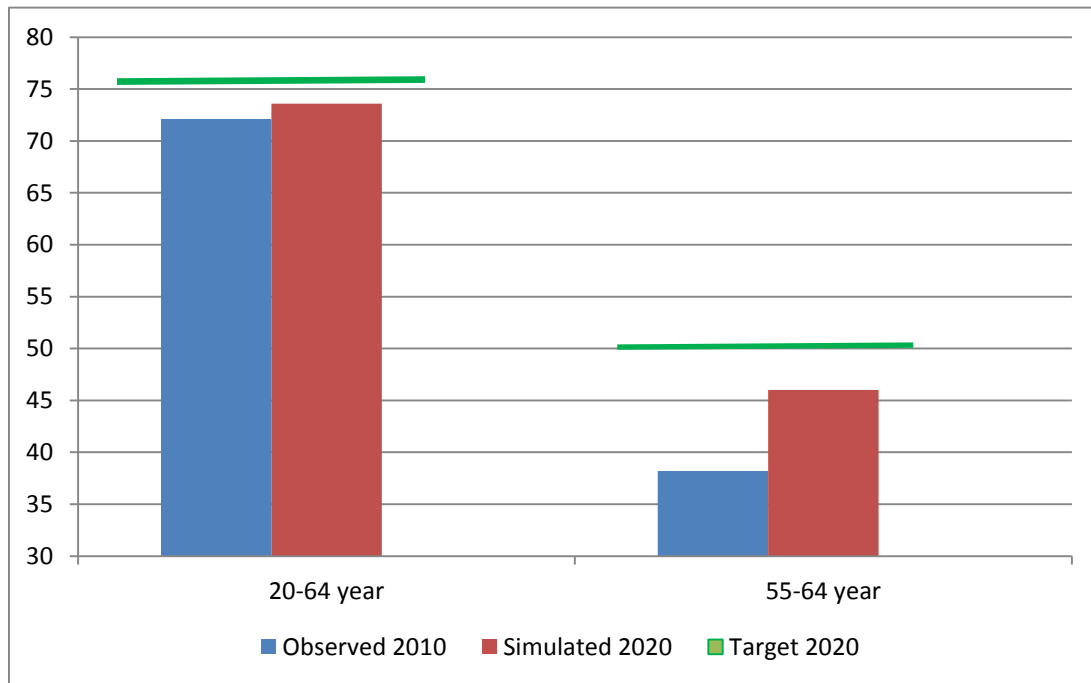
With the Flemish labour account and the thematic scorecards, two pillars have been developed of an integrated labour market statistics system for Flanders (see WP1 and WP2). With this statistical model, the Flemish labour market's various dimensions can be described, making it possible to explain structural problems, analyse long-term developments and detect trends.

Under pressure from the persistent labour shortage and the fast-moving transformations in the economy (globalisation, technological progress, greening, the emergence of a knowledge and service economy) and labour market (a rising education level and increasing duration of studies, increasing participation of women, population ageing), interest is growing rapidly in policy circles in forecasts and projections of developments in supply and demand on the labour market. We respond to this need from three angles: (4.1) Employment rate projections within the framework of the EU 2020 strategy, (4.2) Two pillars of a prospective labour market flow model for Flanders and (4.3) Analysis of the Cedefop labour market forecasts within the framework of VLAMT (Flemish Labour Market Research of the Future).

##### *WP4.1 Employment rate projections within the framework of the EU 2020 strategy*

The taking of concrete measures aimed at achieving the long-term goals set out in EU 2020, the Pact 2020 and the Flemish Reform Programme has created a sharp increase in the demand for employment rate projections, in a model that distinguishes between different (growth) scenarios. In the period 2007-2011, the Policy Research Centre WSE used a cohort component methodology to develop a basic projection model for estimating future employment rates (e.g. Herremans et al., 2010). This basic model is highly supply-oriented, and simulates employment rates on the basis of projected cohort effects, in which the impact of both population ageing and the increasing participation of women are taken into account. This projection indicates that the proposed Flemish 2020 employment targets for the overall labour market (76%) and for those aged 55+ (50%) will not be achieved if policies remain unchanged. This is shown in the diagram below.

**Figure 2.** Projection of employment rates 2020 (Flemish Region)



Source: Federal Planning Bureau, FPS Economy – General Statistics Department – Labour Force Survey (adapted by the Policy Research Centre WSE / Department for Work and Social Economy)

For the period 2012-2015 we will further develop this projection model. The implementation will be detailed in the yearly work schedules. Below, we present some possible activities to elaborate in the work period.

1. **Development of an enriched basic model (baseline scenario).** With the above-described basic model for the projection of future employment rates, we take account of demographic and participation effects. In the next phase, we will investigate the possibilities for also integrating effects related to economic conditions in the model. For this, we propose a different methodology, in which the employment rate is derived from the projection of the economically active population in combination with forecasts of the unemployment rate. For the projection of the economically active population, we use the cohort component methodology, as in the above-described basic model for the simulation of future employment rates. For the forecast of the unemployment rate, we can use the results from HERMREG, a regional and sectoral macro-economic model that makes it possible to break down the main results from the Federal Planning Bureau’s medium-term forecasts region by region. This type of modelling was developed by the Federal Planning Bureau (FPB), the Brussels Institute for Statistics and Analysis (BISA), the Research Centre of the Flemish Government (SVR) and the Walloon Institute for Assessment, Forecasting and Statistics (IWEPS), and ensures coherence between the national economic projection and the regional projections. As the forecast of the unemployment rate is aligned with economic growth expectations, in this way we can also model the expected economy-related effects. Moreover, with this model we link up with an often used and generally accepted methodology for the projection of activity and employment rates. Thus, in the annual report of the Study Commission on Population Ageing (Studiecommissie voor de Vergrijzing), the long-term employment rate is derived from the projected economically active

population and the long-term structural unemployment rate (Hoge Raad van Financiën, 2011). The European Commission also uses the cohort component methodology for the projection of the economically active population and combines this output with a forecast of structural unemployment to derive employment rates (EC, 2008; EC, 2005; Carone, 2005).

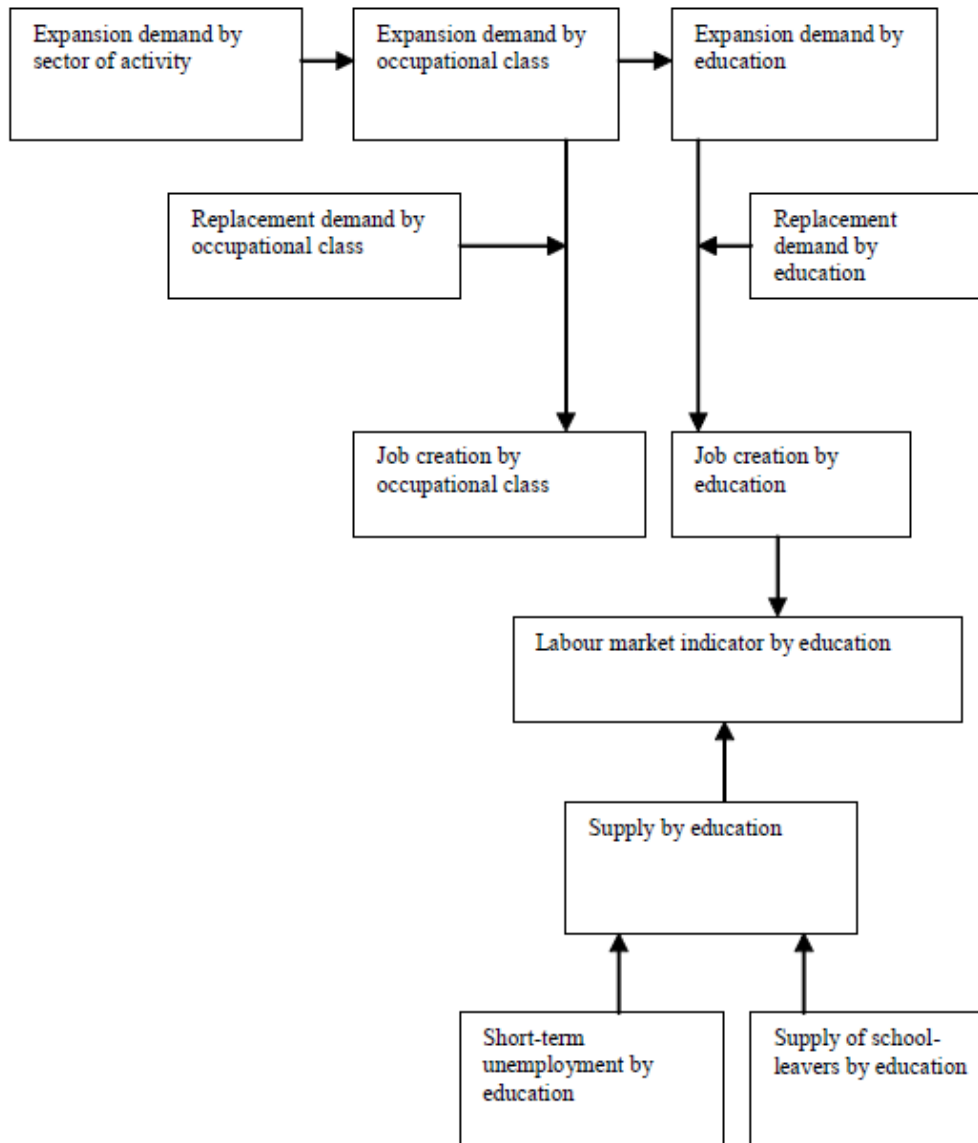
2. **Extension of the basic model (additional scenarios).** While the baseline scenario is presented as a 'no policy change' scenario, additional scenarios are useful in providing information on the key factors driving the projection results. Another extension involves therefore the application of additional assumptions regarding future labour participation. This involves devising scenarios in which we simulate effects of behavioural changes such as longer periods of studying and higher retirement ages, or of proposed achievements such as the attainment of the 50% employment target among those aged 55+. The application of such assumptions requires a review of the relevant literature, including methodologies and modelling algorithms employed by the European Commission (EC, 2008) and the OECD (Burniaux et al, 2004). One possible avenue is the application of sensitivity tests, i.e. changing a single underlying assumption in the projection model (e.g. introducing a linear increase to the employment rate of the persons aged 55+) and quantifying its impact on the overall projection result. The sensitivity tests provide useful information on the robustness of the projections to feasible changes in the key underlying assumptions. Thus, the sensitivity tests enable an assessment of the impact of possible policy changes with an effect on key assumption variables (EC, 2008). Alternatively, the impact of behavioural changes may be assessed more directly by adjusting coefficients used in the cohort component computations (e.g. applying recalculated exit rates that reflect older workers' altered probabilities of retiring after a pension reform).
3. **Development of a subregional projection model.** So as to also be able to reflect the diversity of the regional labour markets in employment forecasts, we propose to develop a projection model at the level of the subregions (RESOCs). This analysis requires the input of subregional employment data and population forecasts. In principle, this information is available in the Flemish labour account and the population projections of the Research Centre of the Flemish Government. Combining these sources therefore presents possibilities for the development of a subregional projection model.
4. **Development of an interactive projection tool.** On the website we offer users an interactive tool that can be used to conduct and consult employment projections. Users are able to define certain dimensions (such as gender or age categories) themselves and make a choice between preselected scenarios. The tool also allows users to calculate the gap that needs to be bridged to reach the proposed employment targets (EU 2020, etc.). An internal application of the simulation tool (accessible with a login) also makes it possible to develop and test alternative scenarios, by modification of the model's projection parameters. We developed a pilot version of this in 2011 (<http://www.kuleuven.be/enquete/mo/SWSE/simulatie/simulatie.php>). We will also adapt the interactive projection tool to take account of the extensions proposed previously (alternative scenarios and subregional projections). Thus we are ensuring that the interactive projection tool develops into an accessible and user-friendly tool that enables policymakers and other interested parties to autonomously run exploratory labour market analyses and test future scenarios.

Insight into and knowledge of observed changes and future trends can provide support for a proactive policy that responds to current and future requirements on the labour market. The importance of prospective labour market research is also recognised in foreign cases and applications at European level. At Cedefop (the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training), work has been in progress since 2005 on a pan-European forecasting system for developments in employment and skills on the supply and demand side in the medium term (see below). In the individual European countries, a diverse range of systems has been developed for describing the developments to be expected in sectors, occupations and skills (Cedefop, 2008).

One best practice model is the method for labour market forecasts that has been developed in the Netherlands by the Research Centre for Education and the Labour Market (ROA - University of Maastricht), known as the ROA model. This model is classified by Cedefop as a 'coordinated holistic system': "A very well-developed and long-established system with multisource funding and strong involvement of social partners, quantitative and qualitative information, very detailed results serving decision-making as well as counselling individuals" (Cedefop, 2008).

For the development of the labour market forecasts, ROA uses an overall labour market flow model. In this approach, forecasts are made of the flows out of and into the labour market (expansion demand, replacement demand, influx of school-leavers) (ROA, 2009). Through the comparison of expected demand and supply flows, an indication is obtained per education type of the future labour market prospects for newcomers on the labour market and of the discrepancies between supply and demand that are to be expected. The diagram below gives a schematic overview of the forecast model.

**Figure 3.** Overall design of the ROA forecast model



Source: ROA

For Flanders, Idea Consult conducted an exploratory study in 2010 of the possibility of developing a tool for labour market and skill forecasts (Valsamis et al., 2010). The method that was presented for Flanders consists firstly of a quantitative labour market forecast model and secondly of a qualitative method for skill forecasts.

In the skill forecasts, the emphasis is on the possible consequences for occupations of a transformation in the economy and in the sectors, in terms of task content and required skills. For these skill forecasts, the researchers propose a bottom-up network model involving all stakeholders (social partners, sectors, education and training providers, etc.).



In the labour market forecast model the change in the volume of employment is forecast per sector, occupation and educational level. This model is designed as a top-down quantitative model constructed from three building blocks: (1) a sectoral macro-economic model, (2) an occupations model and (3) a qualification model. The model is useful for predicting the amount of employment in sectors, occupations and educational levels. In comparison with an overall labour market flow model (such as in ROA), however, the Flemish model still has two significant omissions.

- The model contains no education or school-leaver data. The researchers state that it is advisable to take such data into account in a more integrated system. This would make it possible to express mismatches and the expected supply-demand discrepancies.
- Due to data availability problems, only expansion demand has been taken into account, not replacement demand. The researchers indicate that this may give a distorted picture of the required future employees in sectors characterised by significant ageing of the employee population.

In addition, in connection with the Employment and Investment Plan concluded in 2009 between the Flemish government and the social partners, a platform for Flemish Labour Market Research of the Future (VLAMT) has also been set up. The challenge put forward by the VLAMT project is an ambitious one: "The development of a Flemish system for skill forecasts to provide input for the detection and analysis of medium-term and long-term trends, developments and changes at the level of sectors, branches of enterprise, occupations and activities, and skills, leading to forecasts of maximum possible stability about the extent and nature of future demand on the labour market, ideally expressed right down to skills level" (VLAMT concept paper, not published).

On the basis of desk research and country visits, a design tailored for Flanders has been devised. The functionalities of the VLAMT project will be determined by four building blocks with respect to research and analysis: (1) Econometric and statistical analysis, (2) COMPETENT (a frame of reference for skills and competences in Flanders) and skills-oriented matching on the basis of COMPETENT, (3) Analysis of and widening of access to existing output at European level, (4) ad hoc in-depth research. In a pilot phase, certain components of this design will be tested, using the food industry as a test case. During the pilot phase, the current Policy Research Centre WSE will, within the framework of the first building block (econometric and statistical analysis), calculate the replacement demand for the food industry. With respect to expansion demand, no new projections are proposed, but it is VLAMT's intention to integrate existing sources. For the forecasting of expansion demand use can be made of the models that have already been created for Flanders. Idea Consult's model is useful for forecasting the employment volume in sectors, occupations and educational levels (Valsamis et al., 2010). In addition, on the basis of the economic forecasts of the Federal Planning Bureau and the Research Centre of the Flemish Government, forecasts are also made with regard to net employment growth per sector (Federaal Planbureau, 2011). In the framework of VLAMT, work is also being done on a methodology and procedure for ad hoc in-depth research into change processes in sectors and resultant changes in skill requirements. This working method is consistent with Idea Consult's recommendation that a bottom-up network model (involving relevant stakeholders) should be used for the skill forecasts.

In the course of a Policy Research Centre WSE 2012-2015 working period, it is not realistic to develop a complete and integrated flow model for Flemish labour market forecasts (by analogy with ROA), as there are a number of significant problems and shortcomings:

- The capacity that is required for the development of a holistic model along the lines of ROA is very considerable, and cannot be achieved with the available resources in the present work package.
- Idea Consult's study has already shown that the data infrastructure in Flanders is insufficiently developed for the creation of a quantitative pillar of an integrated model (longitudinal, detailed and harmonised data about employment in sectors, occupations and educational levels).
- For the performance of skill forecasts, the development of uniform skill profiles via COMPETENT is an essential preliminary phase. This still needs to be initiated, however.

Taking account of the proposed functionalities of the VLAMT project and the observed shortcomings, however, it would be useful to conduct additional research into the aforementioned gaps in the Flemish model that has been created so far (Valsamis et al., 2010) and in this way to contribute to the progressive development of a more integrated flow model for Flanders. The analyses that we propose in this connection relate to two pillars that need to be developed in an overall prospective labour market flow model: (1) a feasibility study for linking datasets on education and labour market careers, in collaboration with the *Policy Research Centre Educational and School Careers* (2) a calculation module for replacement demand.

1. **Feasibility study for linking datasets on education and labour market careers**, in collaboration with the *Policy Research Centre Educational and School Careers*. The Policy Research Centre WSE has built extensive experience of administrative population databases, especially during the development of the Labour Market and Social Protection Data Warehouse. As this data warehouse links data from several social security databases and is also systematically enriched with data from regional databases (cf. the AGORA project carried out by the Policy Research Centre WSE with a view to the integration of data from regional employment services), it is suitable for identifying labour market positions and careers. The current Policy Research Centre Educational and School Careers has a great deal of experience of charting school careers and (via surveys) the transition from education to labour market.

The move towards an integrated flow model requires data about school careers to be linked with data about labour market positions and careers. Therefore the consortia for the Policy Research Centre WSE and the Policy Research Centre Educational and School Careers intend to draw up a master plan for linking datasets on education and labour market careers. This proposal implies a generalisation of on-going efforts. For example, the Flemish Employment Service currently link their survey of school leavers with the students' database of the Department of Education, which allows for an in-depth study of the impact of school careers on frictional unemployment upon school-leaving. A logical next step would consist in linking this database with the Labour Market and Social Protection Data Warehouse, so that work careers of school leavers can be studied in detail. A joint task force of both Policy Research Centres would take the lead in preparing the ground for this, if all concerned government services agree to the idea. In the longer run, the master plan may involve the following additional phases: linking the higher education dataset with the students' dataset of the Department of Education; linking this dataset with the VDAB's school leavers dataset and the Labour Market and Social Protection Data Warehouse; linking the database of certificates with the Labour Market and Social Protection Data Warehouse, etcetera. This (ambitious) master plan will obviously require a lot of engineering, negotiation, quality control and operational work. However, this investment will certainly yield a high return in terms of reliability of data, avoided costs of ad hoc surveys and utility of administrative monitoring data. Furthermore, if this linkage can be

achieved, an important step forwards can be taken in the development of a supply pillar for an integrated labour market flow model for Flanders.

2. **Calculation of replacement demand.** In this project, we will examine the possibilities for simulating expected replacement demand in the overall Flemish labour market and in various subdomains such as sectors, occupations and subregions. Replacement demand is the demand that arises due to (early) retirement, other departures, death, migration and job mobility. Replacement demand and expansion demand (or employment growth) together form the total expected labour demand. Replacement demand is generally considerably higher than expansion demand, and even where employment is shrinking there may be a considerable number of job openings or vacancies due to retirement and other forms of departure. Replacement demand is also highly dependent on the working population's age profile. Sectors, occupations or regions with much older employees can expect a higher replacement demand due to early departure from the labour market or retirement. Replacement demand is thus an important component in the context of prospective labour market research. For its calculation, in an ideal scenario use is made of gross flow data (e.g. retirements). Should such data be unavailable, use is often made of a cohort comparison of stock data (Cedefop, 2010; ROA, 2009; Fox & Comerford, 2008; Dunn, 2005).

For the simulation of the replacement demand we can test various models, making use of a range of databases including the Labour Force Survey, the data of the National Social Security Service, the Flemish labour account and the Labour Market & Social Protection Data Warehouse. As well as developing models, we will devise an interactive tool for the online simulation of replacement demand (analogous to the simulation tool for employment rates, see above). We thus offer a tool that policymakers and other stakeholders – including in connection with VLAMT – can themselves use to perform exploratory analyses and simulate replacement demand in various segments of the labour market.

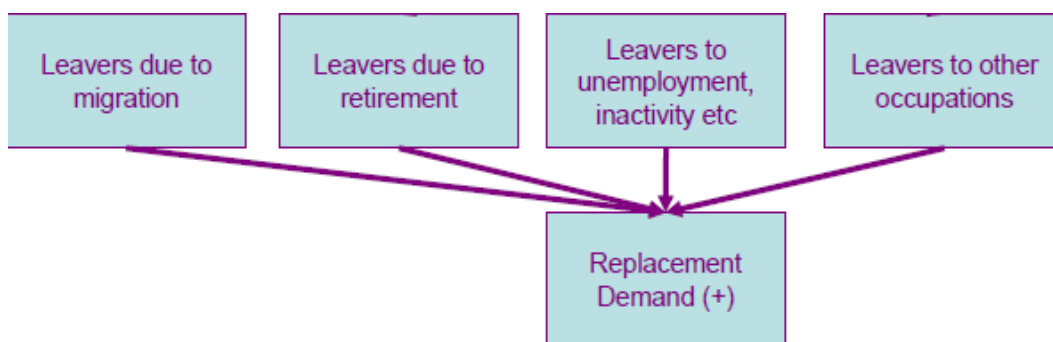
Below we give a brief description of the possibilities for calculating (future) replacement demand in the different subfields and databases.

- *Basic model of overall labour market.* In 2010-2011, the Policy Research Centre WSE developed a basic model for simulating replacement demand related to ageing on the basis of data from the Labour Force Survey. This simulation is based on a comparison of workers' stock data per cohort (five-year age classes) in different years. In this way, the net outflow of older workers from the Flemish labour market is simulated. In other words, the model estimates not total replacement demand, but replacement demand related to permanent retirement and thus also to population ageing.
- *Occupations.* In principle, the Labour Force Survey makes it possible to refine the basic model down to the occupations level. This should make it possible to calculate an occupation-specific replacement demand. We can take as our basis for this the cohort component method as it has long been used in the Netherlands (Cörvers et al., 2010). In this, cohort change rates are calculated also on the basis of the number of people in the same birth cohort who are active in two different time periods. A cohort, however, is in this case a combination of *gender, five-year age class and occupational group*. Through comparison in the two time periods of the demographic structure in a particular occupational group, a picture is created of the net inflow or outflow. This application requires the input of detailed survey data. We will check whether

the Flemish data are sufficiently robust to use a similar occupational model to the Flemish labour market.

- *Sectors.* A second model – for which we have developed a pilot version in the framework of VLAMT (see above) – is based on data from the National Social Security Office and expresses replacement demand related to ageing at sectoral level. Here too, we work on the basis of a comparison of stock data per cohort in different years. The advantage of this source is that it consists of administrative data that offer complete coverage (at least for employees in the private sector). This enables analyses to be performed down to a very detailed *sectoral level*. The disadvantage, however, is that no occupational information is available. Furthermore, the non-profit sector, confronted with an ageing workforce, is only partially comprised in the current model (because we lack data from the subregional governments). This shortcoming can be solved by integrating data from the National Social Security Office for Provincial and Local Governments. By working further on the pilot version we will develop a basic model that makes it possible to reflect the expected trends in the sectors optimally (e.g. total or relative replacement demand related to ageing, new inflow requirements, etc.). In this way, the vulnerability of sectors to demographic changes in the medium term can be expressed.
- *Subregions.* By analogy with the sectoral simulations, we can also devise a model that expresses replacement demand related to ageing in the subregions (RESOCs) and in this way reflects the diversity of the regional labour markets. For this analysis we can use the subregional employment data in the Flemish labour account.
- *Flow model.* The basic model for simulating replacement demand is based on a comparison of stock data in successive years for the same cohort. What we designate as replacement demand on this basis is in fact a net outflow, or the balance of the inflow and outflow per cohort. However, this means that the *gross outflow* is underestimated, particularly in age groups, sectors or occupations where there is a high amount of job mobility or re-entry. Through the use of the gross outflow components, as shown in the diagram below of the Northern Ireland Department for Employment and Learning, replacement demand could be reflected more completely. To prepare for a Flemish application in this area, we will first examine in greater depth the theoretical or conceptual approach to ‘replacement demand’ and consult foreign applications (e.g. Regional Forecasts Ltd, 2006; Wilson & Homenidou, 2008). We will then test the possibilities for estimating the *gross outflow components* (retirement, other departures, migration, death, job mobility) individually using panel data from the Labour Market and Social Protection Data Warehouse. The main advantage of this source is that it represents a linkage at individual level of data from administrative databases. This enables individuals’ labour market trajectories to be monitored in detail over time. The disadvantage is the greater time-lag and hence more limited currency value of the data. Moreover, this source too does not yet contain any information about the occupations in which people are working. Even so, such an analysis offers possibilities for developing new insights and adjusting the basic model using the gross outflow rates calculated here.

**Figure 4.** Replacement demand scheme



Source: Regional Forecasts Ltd, 2006

#### *WP4.3 Analysis of Cedefop labour market forecasts within the framework of VLAMT*

With the aforementioned activities within the framework of a labour market flow model we also offer support for the realisation of the building blocks from the VLAMT project (see above), and hence are able to continue with our commitments in this project. For this it will be necessary to organise dialogue with the partners of VLAMT. Tying in with the third building block of VLAMT ('analysis and opening up of existing output at European level'), we therefore also propose a subproject involving opening up access to and reporting on the Belgian data in the 'Cedefop Country Workbooks'.

As mentioned earlier, work is being done at Cedefop on a pan-European forecast system for developments in employment and skills on the supply and demand side in the medium term. With this research, Cedefop aims to provide information to the European Commission and to the member states to make it possible to anticipate future trends and potential discrepancies between supply and demand. The project's results are compiled in the so-called 'Country Workbooks'. These contain a detailed and harmonised set of historical data for the member states, a benchmark projection and a series of alternative scenarios. Among other things, these datasets can be used to check (1) in which sectors employment growth can be expected, (2) which occupations and qualifications will be in demand, (3) what the expected education level of the economically active population is, and (4) what supply-demand mismatches can be expected.

The information from the Country Workbooks is made available to members of Skillsnet. Skillsnet is coordinated by Cedefop and is a network of researchers and experts in connection with skill and labour market forecasts. The affiliation of the CELM with Skillsnet guarantees access to the data on which the forecasts are based. In the period 2012-2015 we will work on exploiting and reporting on these data so that the information can be passed on to stakeholders involved in prospective labour market research in Flanders.

#### **WP5. Data development**

As a function of (1) the further development of the tools for labour market monitoring (Flemish labour account, thematic balanced scorecards and labour market projections), (2) the substantive and methodological support of the three other research centres of the Policy Research Centre WSE and (3) support for external users (policy actors, administrations, scientific institutions, civil society, etc.) in their efforts to find the most suitable labour market information and to interpret that information properly, we will – as is done by the current Policy Research Centre WSE – continue to invest in developing and opening up access to existing and new statistics sources. To do this, we will prioritise focusing on already

available databases so that the information in them can be further exploited and access to databases which are currently underused in labour market research can be opened up further.

In the table below we give an overview of the main sources that will be exploited further or investigated more closely with a view to filling gaps in monitoring and labour market research. Other sources can also be tapped for more specific applications or ad hoc analyses (such as the European Union Survey on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC), the Continuing Vocational Training Survey (CVTS), the Programme for the International Assessment for Adult Competencies (PIAAC), the European Working Conditions Surveys (EWCS), the Census 2011, the Flemish Workability Monitor, etc.). Among other things, the activities in this work package relate to requesting and retrieving data (often to be programmed at user locations, such as with data from the National Social Security Office and the Labour Market & Social Protection Data Warehouse), making the data ready for use and linking or integrating datasets (such as the microdata of the Labour Force Survey and panel data from the Data Warehouse).

**Table 3** Main sources for labour market research and possible applications in the context of CELM activities.

Source	Institution	Applications
European Union Labour Force Survey	Federal Public Service Economy / Eurostat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Monitoring the EU 2020 strategy</li> <li>- Core indicators for the Flemish labour market</li> <li>- Flanders in a European (regional) comparative perspective</li> <li>- Labour market position of disadvantaged groups</li> <li>- Thematic balanced scorecards</li> <li>- Employment rate projections</li> <li>- Simulation of replacement demand</li> </ul>
Labour Market & Social Protection Data Warehouse	Crossroads Bank for Social Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Flemish labour account</li> <li>- Thematic balanced scorecards</li> <li>- Retirement age and career structuring</li> <li>- Labour mobility and employee flows</li> <li>- Labour market flow model</li> <li>- Longitudinal analyses</li> <li>- Labour market at district level (statistical sector)</li> <li>- Labour market position by nationality or origin</li> </ul>
Flemish labour account	Policy Research Centre WSE / Department WSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Subregional and local labour markets</li> <li>- Employment rate projections (subregional)</li> <li>- Simulation of replacement demand (subregional)</li> </ul>
VDAB	Flemish Public Employment Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Changes in unemployment</li> <li>- Labour market reintegration opportunities</li> <li>- Changes in vacancy market</li> <li>- Labour market shortages and bottleneck vacancies</li> </ul>
RSZ / RSZPPO	National Social Security Office / National Social Security Office for Local and Provincial Public Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Flemish labour account</li> <li>- Sectoral employment and labour volume</li> <li>- Activity sectors and joint committees</li> <li>- Simulation of sectoral replacement demand</li> </ul>
RSVZ	National Institute for the Social Security of the Self-Employed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Flemish labour account</li> <li>- Self-employed activity and entrepreneurship</li> </ul>
RVA	National Employment Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Flemish labour account</li> <li>- Regional labour markets</li> <li>- Retirement statuses and labour reserve</li> <li>- Longitudinal analyses of RVA panel</li> </ul>
Social balance	National Bank of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Training efforts</li> </ul>

sheet	Belgium	- Balanced scorecard sectors
Enriched Crossroads Bank for Enterprises (VKBO)	Research Centre of the Flemish Government / Corve	- Flemish labour account - Job creation and destruction - Analyses at company level
Cedefop	European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training	- Prospective labour market research

In order to be able to carry out this assignment, the CELM will also participate actively in working groups and partnerships in connection with labour market statistics and hence contribute to the networking between statistics bodies, the bringing of uniformity to the conceptual framework, the documentation of the datasets and the opening up of access to existing and new databases. In this way, we aim to ensure optimal use of available databases for labour market research and monitoring. The initiatives in this regard will continue to be pursued in four different areas in the period 2012-2015:

1. **Data management workgroup.** The data management workgroup – run by the Department WSE – is responsible for monitoring and evaluating the work of the CELM. In the period 2007-2011 this working group developed into a broad discussion platform about labour market statistics and monitoring. The fixed list of participants in the workgroup has been extended to include experts from federal and Walloon departments, statistics institutes and research institutes. On an ad hoc basis, guest speakers are also regularly invited to address specific topics with respect to labour market monitoring or data development.
2. **Labour Market & Social Protection Data Warehouse.** The Policy Research Centre WSE shares responsibility with the Centre for Sociological Research (K.U.Leuven) and the Centre Metices (ULB) for the scientific support provided by the Labour Market and Social Protection Data Warehouse to the Crossroads Bank for Social Security. This Data Warehouse represents a partnership between social security institutions. The participating institutions are the Fund for Accidents at Work (FAO), the Fund for Occupational Diseases (FBZ), the Crossroads Bank for Social Security (KSZ), the National College of Mutual Health Insurance Funds (NIC), the Public Planning Service (POD) for Social Integration, the Public Sector Pension Service (PDOS), the National Institute for Health and Disability Insurance (RIZIV), the National Employees' Family Allowances Office (RKW), the National Institute for the Social Security of the Self-Employed (RSVZ), the National Social Security Office (RSZ), the National Social Security Office for Local and Provincial Public Services (RSZPPO), the National Employment Service (RVA), the National Office for Pensions (RVP), Sigedis (database for multi-sector career data) and the VDAB/FOREM/Actiris/ADG (resp. Flemish, Walloon, Brussels and German-Community Public Employment Service).

The purpose of the Data Warehouse is to link socio-economic data from these institutions. This activity takes shape in an Agora project - financed by the Belgian Science Policy - whose objective is the development and methodological refinement of the Data Warehouse (DOCDWH/AG/00/157, 2010-2014). One specific role of the Policy Research Centre WSE consists of developing indicators for national reporting in connection with the EU 2020 strategy and the European flexicurity agenda (such as jobless households or low work intensity, employment rates and labour market transitions).



The Data Warehouse's comparability with the European Union Labour Force Survey (LFS) and the European Union Survey on Income and Living Conditions (SILC) is central to this. In addition, we also participate in the management group of participating statistics institutions, share responsibility for organising a user group and offer support to Data Warehouse users (guide to applications, interpretation of data, support with data requests).

3. **Technical workgroups.** At the CELM, we play an active part in technical workgroups in the area of labour market statistics. At present, we are active in workgroups run by the Federal Public Service Economy (Labour Force Survey), the National Social Security Office (decentralised employee statistics), the National Employment Service (harmonisation of unemployment rates and opening up of access to a longitudinal panel database with career data of former unemployed persons) and the Federal Public Service Employment, Labour and Social Dialogue (harmonisation of labour accounts).
4. **Transnational networks.** Via transnational networks, cross-border contacts are also maintained. This enables us to keep tabs on the development of new standards and methods for uniform and harmonised labour market monitoring. The CELM is active in (1) the European Network on Regional Labour Market Monitoring<sup>3</sup> (a network of regional labour market observatories for the development and dissemination of concepts and tools in the area of regional labour market monitoring) and (2) Skillsnet<sup>4</sup> (a network of researchers and experts in connection with skills and labour market forecasts, coordinated by Cedefop).
5. **Partnerships.** The CELM co-operates with the other research centres of WSE as well as with other policy research centres (PRC) for the exploitation and interpretation of labour market statistics. *Firstly*, we can offer support for drafting data requests, for the compilation of reference populations and for the use of contextual indicators. Among others, this expertise will serve projects of WSE\_SERC (monitor social economy) and the PRC Integration (labour market integration of immigrants). These partnerships are beneficial for CELM, since they offer opportunities to integrate new insights or statistics (e.g. about specific target group workers) into the general monitoring instruments and analyses. *Secondly*, we can give access for the other research centres and other PRC's to the collected datasets, taking into account technical considerations and the limitations imposed by confidentiality and agreements with third parties. Simultaneously and under similar conditions, the PRC Regional Economy and Entrepreneurship will give access to datasets about regional economy for CELM projects (e.g. benchmarking regional labour markets). *Thirdly*, CELM organises a joint project with the PRC Educational and School Careers for the development of an integrated strategic scorecard on the school to work transition and a joint master plan for linked datasets on educational and labour market careers

## WP6. Econometric analyses on administrative data

In line with the core tasks of labour market monitoring and expertise development, this work package focuses on methodologically elaborate analyses on the available administrative databases. Thus far, these databases have been underused in labour market research. Yet, the richness of the data combined with sophisticated econometric techniques can generate innovative insights that are both relevant to the institutional partners and the scientific world. The purpose of this work package is to show the full potential of the available databases by examining two topical and academically relevant subjects.

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3 <http://www.regionallabourmarketmonitoring.net/>

4 <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/about-cedefop/networks/skillsnet/index.aspx>

1. **Start-up rates and their impact on job creation.** In a previous WSE-report (Sels, De Winne & Van Beveren, 2010), we examined the relationship between start-up rates and job creation, thereby focusing on the regional differences between Flanders, Brussels and Wallonia. For the analyses, we used panel econometrics. The longitudinal data on municipal start-up rates were obtained from the Enriched Crossroads Bank for Enterprises (VKBO). The job creation data were obtained from the Flemish labour account. The results of this study allowed us to make international comparisons (see special issue in *Small Business Economics*, 2008) and proved to be very useful for institutional partners involved in labour market policy. In this work package we will replicate and extend the analyses. First, we will reproduce the existing analyses (in 2014 or 2015) to grasp potential changes in the relationship between start-up rates and job creation throughout time, caused for example by modifications in the government's policy regarding entrepreneurship or local economic conditions. Second, we will add data from the Flemish labour account on the incoming and outgoing commuters. The dependent variable in our analyses is the growth in employment at municipal level. These figures take into account the place where a worker lives, not the place where he/she works. If we account for the incoming and outgoing commuters in each municipality, both our dependent variable and analyses will provide a more accurate picture. Finally, we will introduce extra indicators regarding the local economic situation as moderating variables in our analyses. One example is an indicator of the number of bottleneck vacancies in a municipality. Shortages in local labour supply can slow down job creation, thereby endangering entrepreneurship. These analyses should shed light on the economic conditions under which start-ups can flourish and contribute to employment.
2. **Firm demography and firm performance.** Throughout the years, the Policy Research Centre has paid attention to the topic of ageing and individuals' late career (Bollens, 2011; De Coen, Forrier & Sels, 2010; Vermeiren & Mortelmans, 2009; Sels, Van Woensel & Herremans, 2008). Thus far, most of these studies have focused on the behaviour of individuals, and organisational and institutional factors influencing this behaviour. In this work package we will concentrate upon the organisational level of analysis. Based upon panel econometrics and longitudinal information from the Labour Market & Social Protection Datawarehouse and the annual accounts, we will examine the relationship between the firm's demography (in terms of the workforce's age) and firm performance. First, we will study the shape of the relationship between the two variables. We are especially interested in comparing three groups of firms, i.e. firms with a young workforce, an older workforce and a mixed workforce. We will execute these analyses for the economy as a whole as well as for different sectors. Since the nature of work is different between sectors, the relationship between the firm's demography and performance might be different as well. Second, we will focus on the dynamics in a firm's demography, i.e. entry and exit of employees. More specifically, we will study the impact of natural turnover, i.e. the proportion of employees that is retiring in a specific year, on a firm's performance. Natural turnover creates opportunities to correct an unfavourable demography. The net effect of a leave can be positive if a high wage (of the person who is leaving) is replaced by a low wage (of the new employee). However, this net effect depends on the ratio of the productivity of the person who leaves and the productivity of the newcomer. It's the purpose of our analyses to determine the size of the effect as well as differences in this effect between sectors.

## **WP7. Scientific service provision**

The CELM offers support with the consultation and interpretation of labour market information and works to make objective and validated labour market figures available for the benefit of Flemish labour market policy and general public debate. To this end, the following activities are proposed: (1) labour

market information hotline, (2) ad hoc assignments, (3) participation in seminars and other activities, (4) knowledge transfer.

1. **Labour market information hotline.** The CELM is the first contact point for external parties (the scientific world, administrations, policy actors, etc.) looking for up-to-date, reliable information about the labour market. To this end, it is continuing the 'labour market information hotline' of the current Policy Research Centre WSE. This role involves the prompt delivery to external users of factual data about the labour market. In connection with the transfer of the monitoring to the Department WSE (see above), this service was provided during the period 2007-2011 on the basis of a partnership between the Policy Research Centre WSE and the Department WSE. This partnership can be continued, although the precise details of the hotline activity need to be determined afresh in consultation with the Steering Group for Strategic Labour Market Research, taking account of the assignment description and the available capacity in the context of a new policy research centre. Topics to be clarified include the respective roles of the Policy Research Centre and the Department WSE, hotline questions versus ad hoc assignments, priority partners, etc..
2. **Ad hoc assignments.** In connection with a topical debate or specific policy discussion (such as the evaluation of activation for those aged 50+, the EU 2020 strategy indicator set, VLAMT, etc.), the CELM can offer support with the gathering of specific information and the setting up of targeted indicators. Such assignments go beyond the simple delivery of statistical material in the context of the labour market information hotline. On each occasion it will be necessary to consider together the impact of such ad hoc assignments on current activities. This may lead to the postponement of proposed projects in the relevant annual schedule.
3. **Participation in seminars and other activities.** At the request of various actors (policymakers, social partners, sectoral federations, research institutions, etc.), we participate through the CELM in seminars, study days and work meetings relating to labour market analyses. These initiatives provide an opportunity to valorise statistics and analyses more widely.
4. **Knowledge transfer.** At the CELM we will continue to support the Department WSE with the running of existing and future monitoring tools. For this, the partnership with regard to labour market monitoring between the Policy Research Centre WSE and the Department WSE will be continued. Via this platform, knowledge-sharing efforts will continue, for example in connection with jointly maintained series of statistics and co-publications. One important aspect of the knowledge transfer and capacity-building is the creation of autonomous access for the Department WSE to the primary datasets needed for labour market monitoring.

## **WP8. Networking and valorisation**

The CELM serves as a bridge between statistics providers, labour market researchers and policy actors. To this end, it maintains close contacts with the statistics institutions (see also WP5), external research groups, government administrations, social partners and other policy actors. Moreover, the CELM facilitates communication about the products and scientific results of the Policy Research Centre WSE. In order to play these roles, the following products or activities are proposed: (1) a labour market information website, (2) a journal for labour market research (*Over.Werk*), (3) a labour market conference, (4) e-zines and labour market flashes.

1. **Labour market information website.** The website of the Policy Research Centre WSE is pivotal to both the general networking function of the Centre and the valorisation of its products. On the

website, labour market research (WSE Reports, articles in the WSE journal) and labour market figures (in the statistics section) are compiled and made available to external users. The CELM is responsible for the website's technical development and content management. In the period 2012-2015 we plan a set of activities:

- An upgrade of the content management system.
- Adjustments to improve the general accessibility of the website (including for the poorly sighted), inspired by the AnySurfer label.<sup>5</sup>
- Integration of interactive tools for the consultation of time series, employment rate projections (WP 4.1) and replacement demand simulations (WP 4.2).
- A review of the current website's home page. We will check the possibilities for updating the home page more quickly. This will make the website more attractive to consult, and users will benefit more from a (new) visit to the website. One possible approach is to create a section in which we present new and noteworthy statistics by means of an eye-catching diagram. This section could be updated at fixed intervals (e.g. monthly).
- Alignment to the interactive labour market web portal developed by the Department WSE. The Department WSE has developed an interactive tool for the consultation of labour market figures resulting from the monitoring instruments (e.g. labour accounts and thematic scorecards) created by the previous Policy Research Centre in co-operation with the Department WSE. We aim at a more extensive alignment of the statistics section of our website with this web portal. Before updating specific sections of our website, we will assess the complementarity with the interactive web portal. Furthermore, we will support the Department WSE with the further development of the web portal and the integration of new monitoring instruments.

2. **Journal for labour market research (named 'Over.Werk')**. It is now 20 years since the appearance of the first issue of this journal, known at that time as the Newsletter of the Resource Centre for Labour Market Research (Steunpunt WAV). Although the name and style have been modified on a regular basis, the purpose has remained the same: to monitor labour market research in Flanders and Europe closely, to respond rapidly to new, policy-relevant issues, to help bridge science and policymaking with concise and accessible articles, and to reinforce the network of labour market researchers. In the WSE journal there is space for labour market research (the main focus being on Flanders and the Netherlands), in-depth thematic coverage, public debate, statistical analyses and reviews. In the period 2012-2015, we wish to continue to offer the WSE journal as a channel of communication between providers and users of labour market research and statistics. However, the formula and details need to be examined to ensure that they are both desirable and practically feasible in the light of the other work packages.
3. **Labour market conference**. The purpose of the labour market conference is to bring researchers and policymakers together and hence refine the debate about the workings of the labour market. We strive for a mix of contributions from foreign guest speakers, Flemish labour market researchers and policy actors. The conference is also used to present and publicise a selection of the results of the research carried out by the Policy Research Centre WSE. In the period 2007-2011, the labour market conference was organised every year in conjunction with the Department WSE. For the period 2012-2015, we aspire to continue this event in an alternating scheme. In even years, the WSE Conference will primarily function as a 'labour research market' on which researchers from different

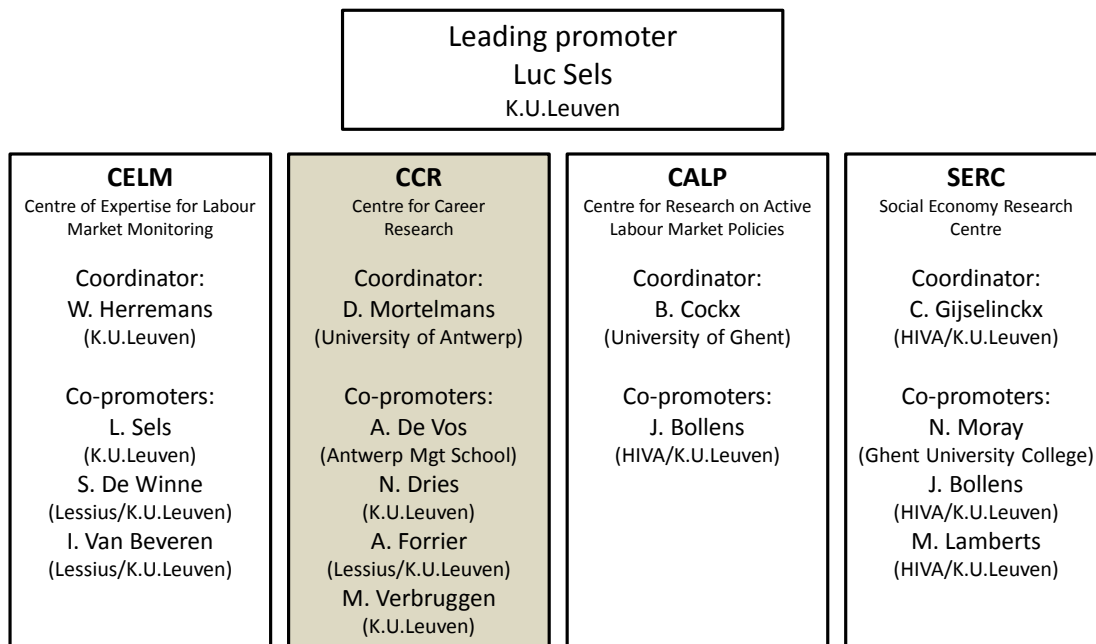
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<sup>5</sup> AnySurfer is a quality label for websites that are accessible to anyone, including people with a physical disability.  
<http://www.anysurfer.be/>

Flemish/Belgian institutions can present and discuss their work in thematic parallel sessions. In uneven years, the WSE Conference will aspire to be a forum to which several internationally acknowledged researchers will be invited to comment on labour market issues and to discuss their views with policy actors.

4. **E-zines and labour market flashes.** Interested parties (policy workers, researchers, journalists, students, etc.) can register for free via the website for the e-zine of the Policy Research Centre WSE. Via the e-zine we communicate on a regular basis about new WSE reports, updates in the statistics sections and study days organised by the Policy Research Centre WSE. We also use the e-zine for labour market flashes: short reports about new figures, noteworthy analyses or unknown aspects of the labour market.

## B. CCR – Centre for Career Research



### Introduction and core tasks

The Centre for Career Research is dedicated to the study of career transitions, with particular attention to research on the transitions from (a) unemployment to work (e.g. job search behavior and job search success) and (b) work to work (job mobility). The CCR will also study the determinants of (early) exit or career withdrawal intentions and behaviours in the late career.

The primary focus will be on the analysis of the antecedents of career transitions (from unemployment to work, work to work, work to early retirement, etc.) and of their effects on objective and subjective career success; the design of intervention models that may support successful career transitions; and the formulation of policy-oriented recommendations (e.g. supporting the extension of the active career (active ageing), the shift from 'job security' to 'career security', the implementation of a protected mobility or flexicurity paradigm).

The work packages of CCR are clustered in three groups. Each group has a different focus on careers and transitionality. The first group (consisting of one work package, i.e. WP1) focuses on the transition from unemployment to work. The study looks at unemployed jobseekers and the influence of flexible search behaviour on objective and subjective career success.

The second (and largest) group of work packages looks at work-work transitions. Work package 2 until 6 will all work on the WSE career survey. Work package 2 concentrates on employability. The study looks at the influence of employment policies on employability and whether employability leads to turnover. Work package 3 is closely related to WP2 and focuses on self-directedness. Both the individual component and the organisational influence are accounted for. Outcome variables of the study are career satisfaction, work-life balance and self-perceived employability. The fourth work package takes negative consequences of transitions as research focus. Job mobility and career transitions are mostly regarded as positive facts. The work package will look at positive and negative pathways of career development. If different pathways are found, antecedents and consequences are taken up in order to understand the differences. In addition, two important moderators are included in the model: the magnitude of the transition and the voluntariness. The next work package (WP5) shifts the attention from the individual worker to the household. Career decisions are not always individual decisions. Work package 5 looks at the influence of the work-life balance and the partner in the development of the career. To what extent do these play a moderating role in transitions and career success? Finally, even though all previous work packages have explicit attention to older workers as one of the basic analytical categories, work package 6 will only study the 50+ subsample of the WSE Career survey. The focus of this study lies on the place of work-time reduction in the late career on exit/retirement. More specifically, the role of the work-life balance in work time reduction decisions and exit from the labour market is modeled.

The third and final group, again consisting of one work package (WP7), looks at the career as a whole. In this work package, not a single transition but the sequence of transitions throughout the life course is looked upon. The work package uses the European Sharelife dataset to make an international comparison of career sequences and its outcomes.

## **WP 1: The impact of flexible job search behaviour on the likelihood of reintegration into the labour market**

### *1.1 Objective*

We investigate the following in unemployed job-seekers: (a) the impact of flexible search behaviour on actual re-orientation in careers and (b) the influence of flexible search behaviour and re-orientation on objective and subjective career success.

*Flexible job search behaviour* refers to the extent to which job-seekers apply for jobs that diverge in terms of content, employment conditions, working hours, etc. from their previous training and from the jobs that they have had in the past. The theme of flexible search behaviour and re-orientation has been largely disregarded in the job search literature hitherto. Consequently, we are unable to rely on

validated scales to measure the degree of flexibility in job-seekers. The first step will therefore be to develop a multidimensional measure of flexible search behaviour.

Next, using a longitudinal design, the following will be investigated in two cohorts of job-seekers entering a state of unemployment:

1. in which dimensions job-seekers display more/less flexibility and hence are more/less 'willing to make sacrifices';
5. how flexibility in job search behaviour relates to other indicators of job search behaviour (e.g. intensity and effectiveness of search behaviour);
6. what the predictors are of (increasing) flexibility in job search behaviour (e.g. (dis)satisfaction with and success/lack of success in the previous job, financial hardship, duration of unemployment, impact of employment service providers and/or career coaches);
7. to what extent flexible search behaviour leads to an actual re-orientation in the person's career (measured as the 'distance' between the previous and the new job);
8. what impact flexible job search behaviour/actual re-orientation has on indicators of objective and subjective career success; with special reference to the theme of underemployment.

For the indicators of objective career success, we primarily look at job search success (e.g. number of job offers, actual re-employment). Indicators of subjective career success are career satisfaction, psychological well-being and health.

We also look in particular at the relation with *underemployment*, as this is a good gauge of re-employment quality. Underemployment refers to a job that is substandard in some way (e.g. low skill utilisation, being underpaid, being overeducated or overqualified) (see Feldman, 1996; McKee-Ryan & Harvey, 2011). Whereas previous research has focused predominantly on the outcomes of underemployment (using e.g. human capital and relative deprivation theory), we will focus on underemployment as a potentially important outcome of flexible job search and actual career re-orientation (as antecedents).

The results of this research will be used for the development of an intervention model that can be applied in job centres and in the guidance of job-seekers, and that focuses on successful re-orientation.

## 1.2 *Relevance*

The Flemish labour market is increasingly often described as a 'knelpunteconomie' (bottleneck economy) (Leroy, 2009; Sels, 2010). Not only has the number of bottleneck jobs and vacancies remained at an unusually high level during the recession, but quantitative shortages on the labour market seem to be ever more persistent, regardless of the state of the economy. The problems with matching supply and demand have thus increased considerably in recent years. In July 2011, Flanders had around 211,000 non-working job-seekers for 59,000 open vacancies. The degree of tension, or the number of non-working job-seekers per open vacancy, was thus lower than 3.6. This level points to an extremely tight labour market. Moreover, there are indications that matching on our labour market is continuing to deteriorate, partly due to sharply increasing replacement demand on the labour market and changes in the composition of non-working job-seekers (e.g. greater distance from the labour market, or the increasing proportion of those aged 50-plus).

On a labour market which is increasingly contending with matching problems, re-orientation into occupations, organisations and sectors with structural labour shortages and/or growth potential becomes more important (Vansteenkiste et al., 2011). This is particularly the case with target groups in

unemployment or facing imminent job loss, and especially when re-employment prospects in the same sector or occupational category are worsening and/or a significant proportion of the demand for labour in growing sectors or occupational categories is not being met. Moreover, the theme of re-orientation is gaining in importance in all career phases. Among young people, re-orientation often becomes necessary if they come from educational sectors with low employment chances. Among jobless people aged 50-plus, re-orientation is often the only solution, in view of the labour market reintegration chances of this target group, which in overall terms are very low.

At the policy level, several initiatives have already been taken to actively support re-orientation. Examples include the premiums for training courses which lead into bottleneck occupations, closer collaboration between VDAB and sectoral social partners in determining training provision for job-seekers (Morissens et al., 2009) and the possibility of obliging unemployed people after six months of unemployment to take up job offers that 'deviate from their profile', for example that fall outside their field of education, require a longer commuting time and/or deviate from their previous job in terms of pay (Vansteenkiste et al., 2011). Moreover, the 'Law on Suitable Employment' (Wet Passende Dienstbetrekking) has recently been amended: whereas until recently an unemployed person was free to look for a 'suitable job' during the first six months of unemployment, VDAB now has the option of shortening this protected period of six months if this is deemed sensible (e.g. when the person's education or previous work experience can objectively be regarded as offering poor chances of reintegration into the labour market).

However, before relying on the introduction of further flexibility in re-orientation as a policy measure, an accurate picture needs to be created of the short- and long-term effects. These effects can be identified through research into the impact of flexible job search behaviour. Re-orientation primarily requires the job-seeker's *willingness* to and *intention* of re-orienting his or her career. That willingness and intention then need to be converted into search behaviour. At present, however, there is little understanding of the many forms that flexible search behaviour can assume, the extent to which flexibility in search behaviour improves/limits the chances of (re)integration in the labour market and the consequences of actual re-orientation for objective and subjective career success. In the context of policymakers' interest in the transition from job security to career security, the relation with *underemployment* is of particular importance, and more specifically the question of whether or not re-orientation leads to employment reintegration in jobs which are below the person's level of education or skill, for example.

In this work package, we plan to study the effects of flexible job search behaviour and of re-orientation. The insights that this yields will enable the impact and prerequisites of a re-orientation policy to be assessed more accurately, and recommendations to be formulated on measures that could support such a policy. Moreover, information about job-seekers' search behaviour is especially relevant for numerous actors involved in labour market policy, such as career coaches, employment service personnel, outplacement offices, educational institutions (with respect to school-leavers), those who train job-seekers, etc. (Saks, 2005). Research into job search behaviour is also crucial to the optimization of interventions aimed at getting people into work. In view of this link with interventions, the plan is to collaborate in this work package with the WSE Centre CALP (Cockx & Bollens).

### 1.3 *Flexible search behaviour*

'Flexibility' refers to individuals' willingness and ability to adapt to changes in their career (Fugate et al., 2004; Hall, 2002). It is increasingly regarded in the academic literature as a necessary career skill, both in general (e.g. Hall, 2002) and for job-seekers in particular (e.g. Vanden Broeck, 2010). It is assumed that flexibility helps individuals to remain employable and to deal with constant changes on the labour market (Hall, 2002; 2004). Moreover, research among the unemployed shows that flexible individuals



are more open to new career options (Forret et al., 2010; Zikic & Klehe, 2006) and may also be more prepared to make sacrifices in the search for a new job.

The concept of flexible search behaviour builds further on this literature about the importance of flexibility as a career skill. Flexible search behaviour refers to the extent to which job-seekers apply for jobs that deviate in terms of content, employment conditions, working hours, etc. from their previous training and the jobs that they have had in the past. Flexibility can relate to several different dimensions. We distinguish between:

- Content: the extent to which a person also looks for jobs whose content does not match his or her past studies or career history, or which require completely new skills more generally.
- Job level: the extent to which a person also looks for jobs which are below the level of previous jobs, are associated with less responsibility and/or require a lower qualification.
- Progression: the extent to which a person also looks for jobs which allow less career progression and offer less growth prospects and/or fewer learning possibilities.
- Pay: the extent to which a person also looks for jobs which pay less than previous jobs or for which the pay does not reflect what the person thinks he or she ought to be earning given his or her level of education or experience.
- Temporal: the extent to which the person also looks for jobs with hours that deviate significantly from what he or she was used to in previous jobs, or jobs that require a rearrangement of the work/life balance.
- Geographical: the extent to which the person also looks for jobs which require significantly longer travel time and/or may make it necessary to move house.
- Identity: the extent to which the person also looks for jobs which match his or her identity or self-image less closely; or with employers whose values he or she does not completely share.

The precise focus will be determined as the research is operationalized. Among other things, this will require an answer to the question of whether it is best to examine the *willingness* to adopt a 'broad' search approach or to re-orient, the *intention* of doing so, the *readiness to make sacrifices* in the search process, and the behaviour actually displayed ('I am also looking for...').

#### 1.4 Research themes

We will survey flexible search behaviour among non-working job-seekers. The questions that are central to our analyses are as follows:

1/ In a first step, we will study the *variants of flexible job search behaviour*. Flexible search behaviour may be a targeted strategy which is based on a careful diagnosis of the possibilities on the labour market and a thorough knowledge on the part of the individual of his or her own strengths, weaknesses and career aspirations. However, it may also be an act of desperation, or the consequence of lack of information (realistic preview) about the requirements of occupations and specific positions. In this last case, job search flexibility is displayed at the expense of job search *clarity* (a critical factor in the job search process). In order to gain an understanding of variants in flexible search behaviour, we look at the coherence with other indicators of job search behaviour, such as sources used to find employment (e.g. Huffman & Torres, 2001), job search intensity (Wanberg et al., 1999) and job search clarity (Wanberg et al., 2002).

2/ In a second step, we identify the *gradations in flexible search behaviour*. The use of different dimensions in flexible search behaviour (content, job level, progression, etc.) makes it possible to

determine the dimensions in which job-seekers display more/less flexibility, in which they are more/less willing to make a sacrifice. This type of information also makes it possible, for example, to determine for different target groups the parameters that delimit the 'radius of action' of possible jobs. In this second step we will also analyze the relationship between demographic variables (such as gender, race, age, and education) and (flexible) job search behaviours. Although the policy relevance (in particular for the employment services) of detailed information regarding job search behaviour of certain groups-at-risk and the unemployed in general is obvious, this would be the first large-scale study in Flanders/Belgium.

3/ In a separate part of the study, we will specify the *predictors of flexible search behaviour*. Our focus will primarily be on four specific classes of predictors: (i) experienced degree of success and satisfaction in the previous job (a push factor which encourages flexible search behaviour in the event of low satisfaction/lack of success), (ii) financial hardship (which encourages the person to make large sacrifices in the search for work), (iii) duration of unemployment and lack of success in the search process (adopting a broader search strategy out of necessity), (iv) the degree of encouragement of flexible search behaviour from employment service providers and in the social network.

4/ An important phase in the research is that which examines *actual re-orientation* (and its relation with flexible search behaviour). A person does not ultimately end up in a completely new job or career because he or she searches flexibly, displays a great willingness to sacrifice and considers many jobs. For this reason, for those job-seekers who accept a new job during the period of research, we will investigate how great the distance is between the previous and the new job. To do this, we will use measures of 'proximity' which make it possible to chart the distance between the two jobs with respect to a number of dimensions (content, pay, job level, etc.). This analysis will also be related to our research into the degree of underemployment (cf. *infra*).

5/ In an important fifth step, we will look at the relation between flexible job search behaviour and *job search success*. Specifically, we have in mind here information about the number of job offers, whether work is found or not, and the duration of unemployment that is experienced. Flexible job search behaviour might be expected to be accompanied with greater and faster success, given that it means that a wider range of jobs is considered. However, employers need to be ready to consider applicants whose background diverges from the profile that is sought. Selection decisions are often based on an assessment of the closeness of fit between the applicant and the job with reference to individual characteristics such as prior training, work experience and place of domicile (Kulik et al., 2007). This can considerably reduce the chances of recruitment of divergent profiles. Moreover, flexible search behaviour may be interpreted by employers as an act of desperation to which job-seekers are only driven by lack of success.

6/ In a sixth step, we want to move towards a broader definition of success, specifically by also looking at the *quality of reemployment* (see also Saks & Ashforth, 2002). Our focal indicator will be the degree of *underemployment*. Underemployment is a multidimensional construct. Relevant dimensions are: possessing more education than is required in the job, or skills that are not utilized in the job, earning less than in one's previous job, etc. (cf. Feldman, 1996). It may encompass both relatively objective job characteristics (e.g. being underpaid or at a lower hierarchical status compared with the former job status) and a subjective interpretation of the employment experience by the worker. Starting from Latack, Kinicki, and Prussia's 'coping and control theory model of reemployment' (1995), McKee-Ryan et al. (2005) argue that displaced workers do not return to a state of equilibrium until they are reemployed in high-quality jobs that are more or less similar to the ones they lost. This equilibrium also reflects a discrepancy reduction. It is therefore important to find out to what extent flexible job search leads to the acceptance of jobs of inferior quality, whether workers in unsatisfactory new jobs continue to cope with their job as though they were still unemployed (cf. Kinicki et al., 2000), and how a low quality of

reemployment impacts other indicators of subjective career success, such as psychological well-being, health or career satisfaction (e.g. Johnson & Johnson, 1996). In our study, the most important indicators of underemployment will be skill underutilization and overeducation. Both these variables are related to 'person-job fit': the match between employees' knowledge, skills, and abilities and the demands of their jobs (Kristof, 1996). Other relevant measures that will be integrated are work-status (in)congruence (representing a (mis)match between employees' preferences for and actual full-time or part-time status, schedule, shift, and number of hours) (Holtom et al. 2002) and pay/hierarchical underemployment (being underpaid or at a lower hierarchical status compared to the former job status).

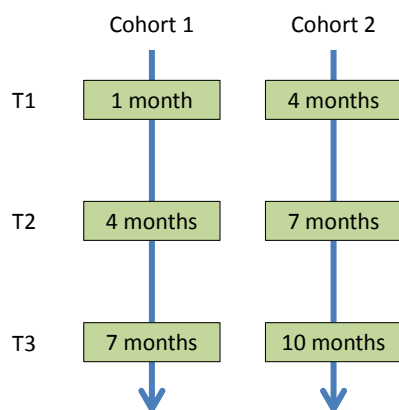
7/ In a seventh step we will look at potentially important *moderators* in the relation between actual re-orientation and experienced/observed underemployment (possibly also in more complex moderated mediation models if the outcomes of underemployment are also integrated). Thus it can be assumed that the degree of underemployment is dependent on the degree of 'proximity' between the old and the new job. It can be assumed that even in the event of actual re-orientation, a certain proximity is important (e.g. partially calling on the same skills). In such a situation, re-orientation becomes more a form of experience *variation*. If there is no longer any similarity and the distance is very great, there is a risk of experience *fragmentation*.

8/ In step 8, we look at the *thresholds* experienced in flexible search behaviour. Whether flexible search behaviour is successful, and to what degree, depends on various factors, such as the extent to which flexible seekers have enough information about and capabilities for the jobs on which they focus, the purposefulness of their search behaviour, the supply of jobs on offer and any shortages in the occupations/sectors concerned, and the signal that employers pick up from flexible search behaviour. In order to gain some understanding of what the main obstacles are in this respect, the perceived thresholds will be gauged in a separate module.

From the policy viewpoint, these research themes are highly relevant and topical, especially now that, with the amendment of the Law on Suitable Employment, an approach involving re-orientation for job-seekers has been taken up far more clearly than was the case before. In other words, there is a need for more fundamental research into (1) both the short- and the long-term effects of flexibility and re-orientation and (2) the factors (personal and contextual factors or support measures) that moderate those effects. A better insight into this area will enable the government, where necessary, to adapt its re-orientation policy, to support it with different measures (e.g. career coaching) and to attune it to specific target groups more effectively.

### 1.5 Research design

Two cohorts of unemployed people, (1) individuals who have just become unemployed and (2) individuals who have been unemployed for four months, will be surveyed at three measurement points (see following diagram). The first cohort will be surveyed one, four and seven months after becoming unemployed. Surveys at three-monthly intervals are also planned for the second cohort, four, seven and ten months after they have become unemployed. At the first measurement point, exclusively unemployed people will be surveyed. From measurement point 2 onwards, the respondents may be either unemployed or working (or inactive), depending on the success of their search behaviour.



VDAB has agreed to cooperate with the surveying of job-seekers. For the first survey, a total of 6,000 people (3,000 in the first cohort and 3,000 in the second cohort) will be written to by VDAB to ask for their cooperation with the study. To this end, VDAB will take a representative random sample from all unemployed people who meet the criteria (i.e. for cohort 1: was working prior to unemployment and has been unemployed for two weeks to one month at the time of sampling; for cohort 2: was working prior to unemployment and has been continuously unemployed for three-and-a-half to four months). The follow-up surveys will be administered by WSE's researchers. Below, we describe once more for both cohorts how the random sample will be taken and what the expected response should be – assuming the most rigorous response scenario on the basis of results reported in similar studies in the literature.

### **Cohort 1**

- Average influx of people who have been unemployed for one month = 14,400
- Random sample of 3,000 people who have just (i.e. between two weeks and one month ago) become unemployed.
- The most rigorous scenario for response rates at each survey round is shown in the table below:

	Achieved response with 30% response rate at t1, 50% response rate at t2 and 50% response rate at t3
t1 = after 1 month	900
t2 = after 4 months	450
t3 = after 7 months	225

## Cohort 2

- Average influx of people who have been unemployed for four months= 9,400.
- Initial sample of 3,000 people who have been unemployed for between three-and-a-half and four months.
- The most rigorous scenario for response rates at each survey round is shown in the table below:

	Achieved response with 30% response rate at t1, 50% response rate at t2 and 50% response rate at t3
t1 = after 4 months	900
t2 = after 7 months	450
t3 = after 10 months	225

The repeated measurements in the longitudinal design make it possible to avoid problems of common method bias, and the time lags between the measurements enable clarity to be achieved about the direction of causality and, with sufficiently long time intervals, to determine the effects of search behaviour.

The cost of data gathering will be borne by the Research Centre for Organisation Studies (Faculty of Business and Economics, K.U.Leuven). Only the personnel cost of the doctorate student will be borne by the WSE budget.

## Introduction to Work Package 2 – 6

### *General theoretical link in work packages 2 - 6*

Work package 2 until 6 share the common theoretical focus on transitions from work to work. These work packages share a common theoretical framework rising from the recent career literature. A central tenet in contemporary career theories is that careers imply a 'new deal' between employer and employee, in which the promise of employment security is said to be replaced by employability (e.g., Fugate & Kinicki, 2008; Inkson & King, 2010). This evolution is accompanied by a *major shift in responsibility for career development from employers to employees*. Employees are considered to be responsible for acquiring knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics valued by current and prospective employers (Fugate & Kinicki, 2008; Fugate et al., 2004) and for negotiating their own idiosyncratic deal with their employer (Rousseau, 2005)..

We can summarize the transformations as:

- the decline of the average tenure (Arthur & Rousseau, 2001)
- the increasing proliferation of alternative working arrangements (part-time work, telework, portfolio work)
- the emphasis on the individual responsibility for career management
- the shift from job security to career security

- the growing importance of new forms of learning and skill-development
- the redistribution of long-term risks (including unemployment) between employers and employees (Beck, 2000; Van Buren, 2003), the emergence of new risk groups
- the transformation of gender relationships in regard to work and the distribution of labour
- the blurring of the previously strict division between work and family spheres, with the growing importance of work-life balance.

The transformation of careers is translated into a set of challenges for policy makers, existing against the backdrop of the latest socio-demographic changes, such as the heterogenisation of the labour force and ageing of the European population. Policy makers are confronted with a plethora of challenges, such as activating older workers, optimally supporting career transitions (both within the labour market and between work and non-work), mitigating structural risks peculiar to specific groups, stimulating the development of (meta-)skills and competencies that support longer careers, empowering individuals to take responsibility for the management of their careers with the use of counseling and reorientation, etc.

The study of transitional careers stood as a prominent thread of research and analysis in the *Steunpunt WSE 2007-2011*. In what follows, we propose 6 work packages that further elaborate and advance the empirical knowledge of the contemporary career in Flanders in order to inform policy makers, social partners and other participating actors about the relevant aspects of contemporary careers, as well as the logic of their development and the concomitant risks.

#### *Special attention for older employees*

In the context of ageing European population, the challenge of prolonging careers enjoys a prominent position in the political and research agenda. The economic and social necessity to work longer is reflected in the trends towards increasing legal retirement age, the debate around different retirement forms, as well as various activation policies. The Pact 2020 speaks of maximizing the potential of late-career workers, involving, if necessary, alternative work arrangements. The activation of workers in their late career is closely related to the shifts within the labour market towards flexible career forms and the impetus for increasing competitiveness in the light of a globalizing and knowledge-intensive economy. The transformation of the psychological employer-employee contract towards an emphasis on career security, as well as increased requirements in regard to training and knowledge lead to additional pressures in late career stages (Segers, Inceoglu, Vloeberghs, Bartram, & Henderickx, 2008). In Flanders, these developments take place in the context of a relatively low actual exit age, modest labour market participation of the workers above 50 and an increasing share of unemployed in that age category. Moreover, empirical analyses indicate that gradual retirement schemes do not necessarily lead to career prolongation.

Work packages 2 - 6 all take the older worker as a specific focus of attention. Sometimes comparisons are made with early career, other studies only focus on exit from the labour market. It is the intention of the CCR to inform policy makers, social partners and other participating actors on the decision making process of older workers and the possible policy measures to be taken in order to further lengthen the current careers.

#### *Common use of the WSE Career Survey in work packages 2 - 6*

Work Packages 2 – 6 will all use the WSE Career survey that was collected in the Policy Research Centre WSE (2007-2011). The survey is conceived as a two-wave panel of which the first wave is realised in 2011. The aim of the survey is to gain insights in the development of careers in Flanders and the rationale behind transitions on the labour market. The sample is representative for Flemish labour force (with the exception of Brussels). Themes included in the study are (amongst others): social and

economic causes and consequences of labour market decisions, career perspectives on the long term, recent search behaviour and transitions on the labour market, employability, work-life conflict and career success.

### *The sample*

The sample is a two-stage random sample with an oversampling of older workers (50+). This decision was made because the group of older workers is crucial to the research proposed in the work packages 2-6 (cfr. supra). First, 115 Belgian municipalities were selected in which a representative sample of individuals (aged 18-65) was drawn. Students and self-employed respondents were excluded. All individuals were interviewed face to face. An average interview took 50 minutes to complete.

### *Response and wave 2 participation*

In total, the first wave realised a response of 53.1%. 1518 respondents were interviewed of which 49% men and 51% women. All respondents have been asked whether or not they wanted to participate in the second wave of the survey. In total, 90% of the respondents accepted to be recontacted. The second wave will be collected in 2012 but will not be financed by the Policy Research Centre. Nevertheless, from 2013 onwards, the work packages 2-6 will be able to use the full two-wave panel for their analyses.

In the presentation of the work packages, we will refer to this survey as the “*WSE Career survey*”.

## **WP 2 Employability**

### *1. Objective*

In this work package, we plan to study among employed people to what extent (a) employer policies influence employability and (b) employability leads to turnover. We will moreover investigate whether these relationships differ between different age groups. Additionally, we will examine among older workers to what extent employability decreases the likelihood of retiring early.

Employability concerns the individual’s likelihood of obtaining and retaining a job (Forrier & Sels, 2003; Rothwell & Arnold, 2007). We will focus on perceived employability, i.e. individuals’ perceptions of the likelihood of obtaining and retaining a job, that is, the individual’s beliefs about how easy it is to find new employment or to keep the current job (e.g., Berntson, Sverke and Marklund, 2006, De Cuyper et al., 2008, Rothwell and Arnold, 2007, Wittekind, Raeder & Grote, 2010). We will not only look at employability in the external labour market (external employability) but also at employability in the internal labour market (internal employability).

Overall, we aim to address the following research questions:

- Which employer policies and job characteristics enhance perceived internal employability?
- Which employer policies and job characteristics enhance perceived external employability?
- To what extent do perceived internal employability and perceived external employability impact turnover? And how do they interact?
- Do the above effects differ between age groups?
- Does employability lengthen the career? To what extent do perceived internal employability and perceived external employability impact early retirement among older workers? And how do they interact?

### *2. Relevance*

One aspect of career security is the ability to stay employed. The ability to stay employed relates to the notion of employability. Although the concept employability dates back to the 1950s (Feintuch, 1955), it has recently attracted renewed attention from both policy makers and researchers from disciplines as diverse as management science, economics, psychology and sociology. Currently, employability is no longer considered important only for those entering the labour market (e.g. students, unemployed, inactive), but also more and more for employees. This interest in the employability of employees is inspired by changes in the labour market, the employer-employee relationship and the pattern of individual careers. Careers are believed to become increasingly fragmented and employer-independent (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996; Hall, 2002), individuals need to comply with job-to-job transitions (Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2006) and they face more job insecurity (De Cuyper, Bernhard-Oettel, Berntson, De Witte, & Alarco, 2008). Lifelong job security gives way to lifelong employability. This lifelong employability is not only important in the external labour market (external employability) but also in the internal labour market (internal employability).

This shift from lifelong job security to lifelong employability is often linked to the shift from the old to the new psychological contract. The old psychological contract is characterised by an exchange relationship in which the employer offers a salary and security for permanent loyalty and good work from the employee. In the new psychological contract, the employer offers the employee a salary and the necessary support and facilities to expand his or her employability in exchange for the employee's effort and commitment to the job. The question rises however to what extent this new psychological contract is feasible. Although lifelong job security is no longer standard in a fast changing economy, employers are, at the same time, competing in a war for talent with other companies. They are increasingly facing labour shortages. So why would they invest in the employability of their employees if it makes them more attractive to other employers? In this work package, we want to tackle this question.

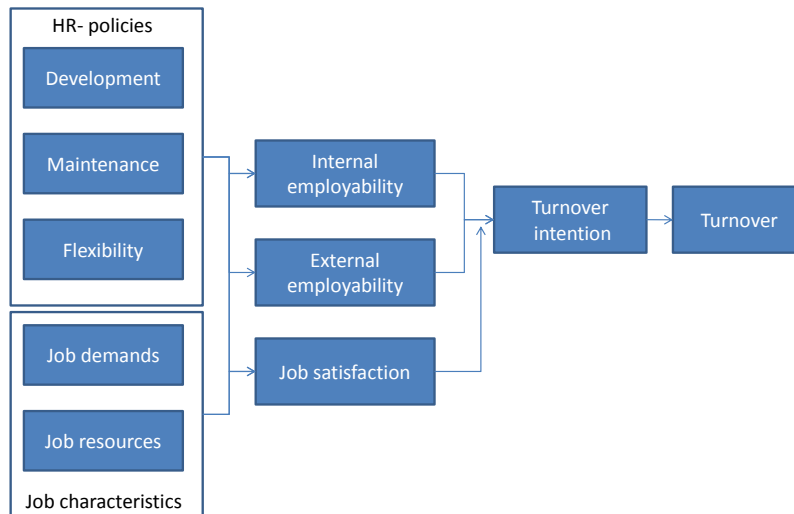
In light of the ageing society, it is moreover important to study whether models of employability and career behaviours are valid for all age groups. In addition, findings on the impact of employability on early retirement, may moreover increase or insights in how to lengthen the career.

### *3. Research themes*

We will study the impact of employer policies on perceived employability and of perceived employability on turnover. Perceived employability is related to the notion 'ease of movement' as defined by March & Simon (1958). The concepts of March and Simon (1958) are at the basis of most turnover research. March & Simon consider the 'ease of movement', i.e. the individual perception of the ease of moving in the labour market, as an important antecedent of turnover. In turnover literature, the 'ease of movement' is merely focusing on external ease of movement. However, while the ease of movement in the external labour market may trigger turnover, the ease of movement in the internal labour market may have the opposite effect and may tie employees more closely to the organisation. Therefore, it is important to gain insight in the relationship between internal and external employability and in the interplay between both factors to influence turnover. Besides ease of movement, March and Simon (1958) also defined 'desirability to move' as an important moderator explaining turnover. This perceived desirability is classically considered to be job dissatisfaction (Donnelly & Quirin, 2006). We therefore also include job satisfaction in our analyses. Using the data of the WSE Career survey, we will test the following research model (Fig. 1).



**Figure 1** General research model work package 2



In a *first* step we will look at the impact of employability-enhancement. Little is known about the impact of specific HR policies on internal and external employability. Specific HR policies may impact the (perceived) employability of employees differently. In the WSE Career survey data, we can distinguish different types of HR policies. Development HR policies (such as training and career counseling) directly aim at enhancing the employability of employees. However, little is known about the extent to which they might impact the internal and external employability differently. Maintenance HR policies are practices that help employees to maintain their current level of functioning in the face of new challenges (Kooij et al., 2010). Such practices include for instance flexible work schedules (such as a shorter workweek) or ergonomic measures. Maintenance measures may aim at retaining valuable employees, but may at the same time decrease their internal and presumably more strongly their external employability. HR policies focusing on flexibility, such as working at home or child care, give employees more flexibility to balance their working and private life. Although these measures may not so much influence the internal employability, they may decrease the perceived external employability since employees may find it harder to find a comparable job externally. We will also investigate to what extent these HR policies impact job satisfaction.

Besides HR policies, job characteristics may also impact perceived employability and job satisfaction. We will distinguish job demands from job resources (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Job demands are aspects of the job that require sustained physical or psychological effort or skill, such as work effort or social demand. Job resources are energizing aspects of the job, such as career opportunities, role clarity or social support. Research has demonstrated the fact that job demands have psychological costs (such a lower job satisfaction), whereas job resources may reduce these costs. Although mainly job resources are believed to stimulate personal growth and development, little empirical research has investigated the impact of job characteristics on internal and external employability.

In a *second* step we will study the impact of internal employability and external employability and their interaction with job satisfaction on turnover intentions (at time 1) and on actual turnover (at time 2). According to March and Simon (1958) and many turnover researchers using their ideas, workers will only quit if they have both a desirability to move (often due to job dissatisfaction) and a high ease of

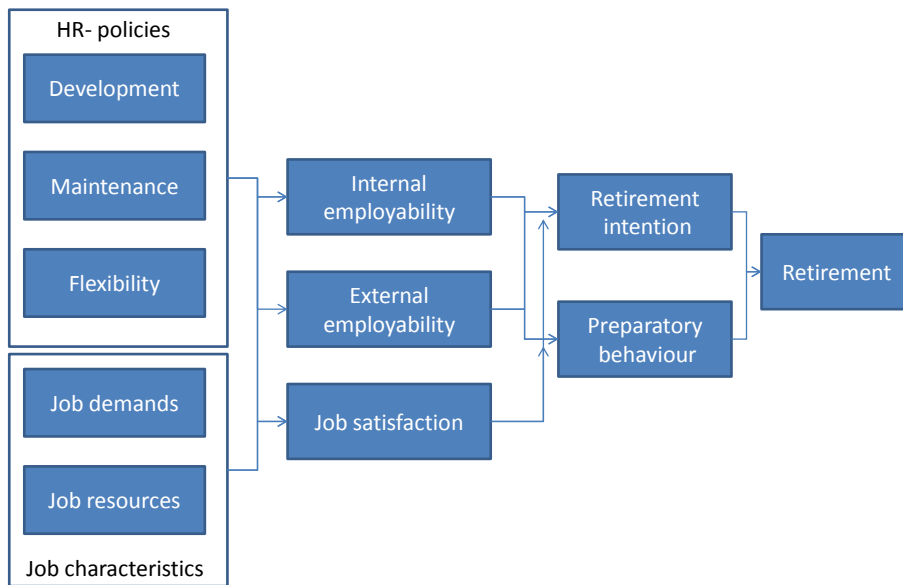
movement (i.e. many alternatives in the external labour market). We will extend this work by adding internal employability. We will study the extent to which internal employability, external employability and job satisfaction jointly shape turnover intentions and lead to real turnover.

In a *third step* we will study age differences. Several research findings indicate that the effects of the above model may differ across age groups. For instance, in their meta-analysis, Kooij et al (2011) find that the relationship between maintenance HR practices and work-related attitudes strengthens with age, while the relationship between development HR practices and work-related attitudes weakens with age. De Vos and Forrier (2011) studied how internal and external employability impact active job search across different age groups. They found that for younger workers a lack of internal employability is the main driver to start looking for another job. For the middle group both internal and external employability are important. While for the older workers employability has no impact on active job search. In light of the ageing labour market, we will therefore also test the model across different age groups.

In a fourth and final step, we will focus specifically on the older workers (age 50 or more). For this group, we will test the model with different outcomes (Fig. X). We will study to what extent employability enhancing activities, perceived employability and job satisfaction, may impact (1) the intention to retire early, (2) behaviours signaling early retirement (such as calculating one's pension, informing about possibilities to retire early, etc.) and (3) actual early retirement (at time 2).

Employers may use different strategies to keep their older workers longer. In line with the above distinction, De Lange and Thijssen (2007) differentiate development measures from maintenance measures. Both types of measures aim at a better fit between the worker and the job. Where maintenance measures adapt the job (e.g. by offering ergonomic tools or by adapting the work schedule), development measures adapt the worker (by increasing his or her skills and competencies). However, these measures may impact job satisfaction and employability differently and may therefore have a different impact on retirement intentions and behaviours. In this study, we want to investigate these relationships. Moreover, in the debate on early retirement, it is often argued that people leave the labour market because of the low quality jobs they are in. We therefore also want to investigate to what extent job characteristics (job demands and resources) impact retirement behaviour and intentions via their influence on job satisfaction and employability.

**Figure 2** Research model older workers work package 2



### WP 3: Self-directedness

#### 1. Objectives

The goal of this work package is to respond to the need to further clarify the factors influencing career self-directedness and its relationship with career outcomes over time, thereby taking into consideration employees from different age, education and income strata. We thereby take a broad conceptualization of self-directedness, encompassing both a reflective and behavioural component. As such, this contribution intends to add to the policy making about how to facilitate career security by stimulating and supporting employees' self-directedness, thereby considering possible boundary conditions. Moreover, the outcomes will form relevant input for other actors playing a role in employees' careers, i.e. organisations who want to support their employees in managing their own career as well as for professionals guiding individuals in career counseling or job search.

More specifically, we address the following research questions:

- What is the prevalence of different indicators of self-directedness (reflective and behavioural component) for employees from different age, income and education strata?
- What is the relationship between organisational support (training and career development) and employees' self-directedness?
- What is the relationship between employees' previous career transitions (number, type and volition) and self-directedness?
- What is the impact of self-directedness on subjective career outcomes (career satisfaction, work-life balance and self-perceived employability)?
- What is the impact of self-directedness on turnover? To what extent does self-directedness lead employed individuals to change jobs or employers versus make adaptations to their current work

situation? What is the moderating role of self-directedness in the relationship between subjective career outcomes and turnover?

- Do these relationships differ depending on employees' age category, income level or educational level?
- What is the impact of self-directedness on older workers' retirement intentions / decisions?

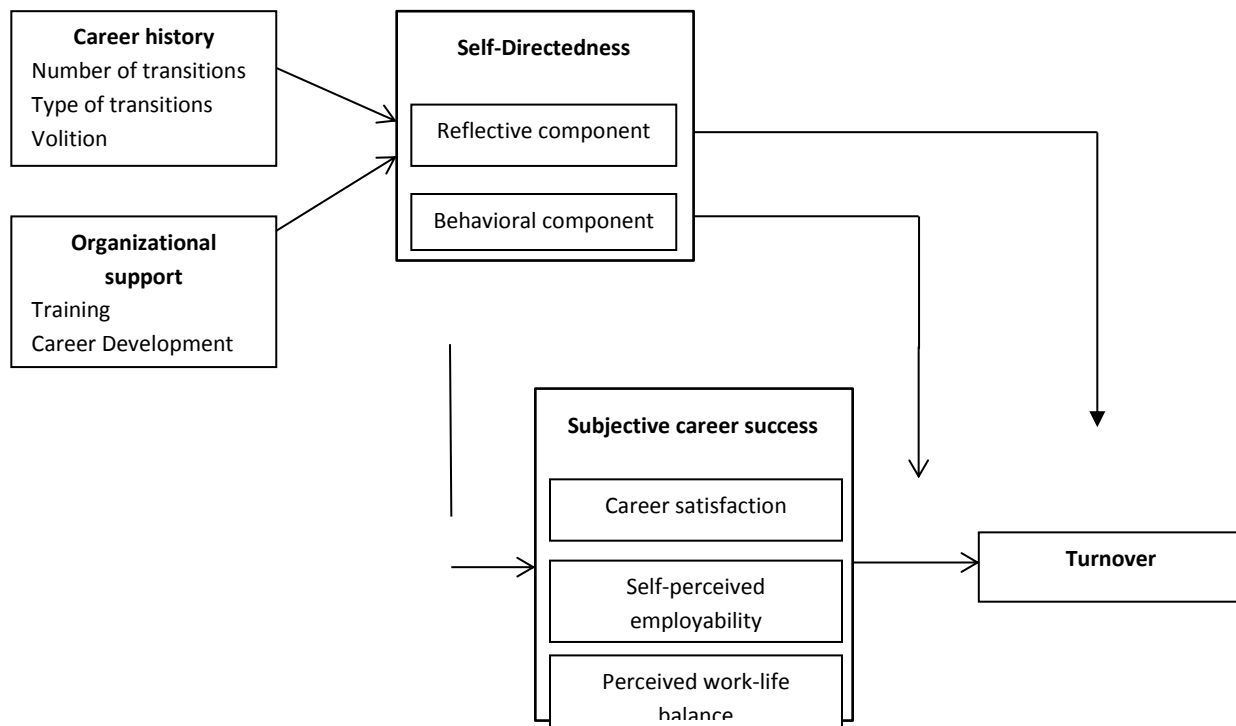
## 2. *Relevance*

*Self-directedness is considered to be a critical antecedent of contemporary career success* (Arthur, Khapova & Wilderom, 2003; Eby, Butts & Lockwood, 2003). Implicit in this assumption is that individuals master a set of career competencies that allow them to successfully navigate their career (Eby et al., 2003). The recent economic crisis has made it painfully clear to many employees that they cannot simply rely on their current employer to provide them with career development perspectives or simply a job. *Yet, many employees do not feel equipped to take charge of their own career*, one of the reasons being that they have never learned what it means to be self-directed. The emphasis on self-directedness in contemporary thinking about careers therefore encompasses the risk of a gap between those individuals who are more and those who are less inclined to take control over their career (Zeitzi et al., 2009). Earlier studies show that self-directedness is the highest among those employees reporting a high level of work centrality and career ambition (Nabi, 2000) but less is known about self-directedness among employees outside of this group. In view of this there is a need for further research on the factors that enhance employees' self-directedness, thereby addressing both individual and organisational factors.

## 3. *Research model*

The research model underlying this study is presented in the following diagram.

**Figure 3** Research model



**Career self-directedness** is the central variable in our model. It refers to the proactivity employees show with respect to managing their careers (King, 2004; Kossek, Roberts, Fisher & Demarr, 1998). It includes employees' efforts to define and realise their personal career objectives, which can or cannot correspond with the organisation's objectives. A review of the literature reveals a wide range of cognitions and behaviours being studied, as well as a wide variety of terms used to label "career self-directedness" (e.g. self-management, proactive career behaviour, individual career management, career competencies) (King, 2004; Sturges et al., 2000; 2002; Kuijpers et al., 2006). Together these studies indicate that two components of career self-directedness can be discerned, i.e. a reflective and a behavioural component. While the former refers to the insights individuals develop into their own career aspirations, the latter refers to the behaviours they initiate with the aim of managing their career. Both components are considered as career competencies relevant for contemporary careers (Kuijpers et al., 2006).

Reflective Component. Several studies address the importance of career insight as an antecedent of career success (e.g. Defillippi & Arthur, 1994; Eby et al., 2003; Kuijpers et al., 2006). London (1983) introduced the concept of career insight to refer to the realism and clarity of an individual's career goals and to their self-knowledge regarding personal strengths and weaknesses. The career insight concept is conceptually related to Super's (1957) vocational self-concept and it can be related to the notion of self-awareness. According to Mirvis & Hall (1994), individuals' feelings of career success are affected by their abilities to make sense of their constantly changing work agenda and to integrate their work experiences into a coherent self-picture. This suggests that it is important for individuals to develop career insight that allows them to make meaningful choices. *In the current study we include the following indicators: self-directed learning orientation, self-directed career orientation, self-awareness, work importance, and insight in personal career values.*

Behavioural Component. The behavioural component of career self-management builds on the notion of proactivity and it refers to the concrete actions (e.g. networking, self-nomination, creating opportunities) undertaken by employees to realize their career goals (King, 2004; Noe, 1996; Sturges et al., 2000; 2002). These actions can focus on improvement in one's current job or on movement within or outside the company (Kossek et al., 1998; Sturges et al., 2002). Several authors have studied the relationship between career self-management behaviours enacted by individuals and career-related outcomes. These studies reveal the importance of a wide range of self-management behaviours for career success (e.g. Claes & Ruiz-Quintanilla, 1998; King, 2004; Sturges et al., 2000; 2002). *In the current study we include the following indicators: initiatives to participate in training and networking behaviours.*

### *3.1 Antecedents of career self-directedness*

*First, at the individual level we address the impact of employees' career history on their career self-directedness. Whilst earlier studies have shown a positive association between individual attributes like gender, personality traits and work attitudes (Sturges et al., 2010), in this study we focus on employees' earlier career transitions. Previous career transitions may play a role in developing career (meta-)competencies (Defillippi & Arthur, 1994), among others those pertaining to career insight and career self-management behaviours, by coping with career transitions.*

*In this study we address (1) the number of earlier career transitions, (2) the type of transitions (from work to work vs. between unemployment and work), and (3) the degree to which transitions were made voluntary. Although contemporary career theories tend to assume that career mobility is associated*

with career self-directedness (Arthur et al., 2003), we propose that this relationship might not always be positive. For instance while frequent self-initiated transitions within or across organisations might be associated with higher levels of self-directedness, employees having experienced involuntary transitions, demotions or transitions from work to unemployment might actually report a lower level of self-directedness.

*Second*, we include *organisational support* (career support and provision of training opportunities). The growing emphasis on individual agency in the study of careers has resulted in a diminishing interest in the role of organisational initiatives (De Vos & Soens, 2008; De Vos, Dewettinck & Buyens, 2009). This is surprising considering the fact that organisations form the context within which careers unfold and hence cannot be neglected in understanding career security. Organisational career support is still an important factor in explaining career success (e.g. De Vos, Dewettinck & Buyens, 2009; Sturges et al., 2002). Moreover, research has shown that providing career help such as training, mentoring and career advice encourages employees to engage in career self-management behaviours (Sturges et al., 2010). In general, however, employers focus this help on those – often young and well educated - employees they wish to retain and develop (Arnold, 1997; Sturges et al., 2002), i.e. their core-employees. The downside being that employees falling outside of this target group do not acquire the necessary career competencies (self-insight and career self-management behaviours) that safeguard their future career options on the internal or external labour market. However, as to date there is a lack of research addressing career support and the relationship with self-directedness for a broader category of employees.

### *3.2 Career self-directedness and career outcomes*

First, we address the relationship between career self-directedness and three indicators of subjective career success: (1) career satisfaction, (2) self-perceived employability, and (3) perceived work-life balance. There is a growing body of research demonstrating a positive link between career self-directedness and positive career outcomes, thereby supporting the general claim that being self-directed is beneficial for one's career (e.g. Eby et al., 2005; Ng et al., 2005). However, a major limitation to most studies is that they were either conducted in organisational settings where self-directedness in itself was highly valued (e.g. Sturges et al., 2010) or using samples of higher-educated and relatively young employees (e.g. Abele & Wiese, 2008). The use of the panel survey allows us to explore the outcomes of career self-directedness among a representative sample of the workforce, with special attention for employees from different age, income and education strata.

*Second*, we study the relationship between *career self-directedness and turnover*. In the past decade, career mobility has become a topic receiving a great deal of attention from both career researchers and policy makers (Feldman & Ng, 2007). However, while many studies have addressed attitudes toward mobility, actual mobility has remained a relatively understudied topic. In this study we relate career self-directedness to turnover at T2 both *directly as well as indirectly by investigating its moderating role in the relationship between subjective career success and turnover*. Earlier studies have provided support for the idea that subjective career success is an antecedent of turnover, but it remains unclear to what extent self-directed employees are more likely to quit an unsatisfying job or to make adjustments to improve their current work situation. Based on the broader theoretical framework on proactivity (Grant & Ashford, 2008) we expect that self-directed employees will be more likely to take action when they experience a lack of satisfaction with their career, or report low levels of self-perceived employability or work-life balance. This action might not be limited to leaving their organisation. At T2 of the WSE Career survey we will include a broader set of actions employees can engage in, which encompass adjustments to their current job content (e.g. changes in job content or working hours), intra-organisational mobility

(e.g. vertical or horizontal move), or extra-organisational mobility. Again, specific attention will be paid to whether these relationships hold for employees from different income, age and education strata.

### *3.3 Self-directedness and older workers' retirement intentions and decisions*

For the subsample of employees aged 50 plus, we will include an additional outcome variable, i.e. *retirement intentions and behaviours*. Career self-directedness might well become a critical challenge when it comes to older workers' careers and, more specifically, their intentions and decisions regarding their career length. Within the careers literature, several studies have demonstrated the importance of career self-directedness for individuals in the early stage of their career (e.g. De Vos, De Clippeleer & Dewilde, 2009; Sturges et al., 2002). Considering the ageing of the workforce, an important question that arises is *whether self-directedness can also explain individuals' end-of-career intentions and decisions*. As to date, the empirical research on end-career changes in the context of transitional career patterns is scarce. From the existing data, we can conclude, on the one hand, that job mobility in non-traditional careers decreases with age (Cheramie, Sturman, & Walsh, 2007; Gerber, Wittekind, Grote, & Staffebach, 2009), conform earlier findings in the career literature in general. On the other hand, the data demonstrate that career insight, competencies and psychological orientations that could support positive end-career transitions, tend to grow stronger (Briscoe, Hall, & Frautschy DeMuth, 2006; Segers, et al., 2008). In a recent study, we found that older workers with a more self-directed career orientation were less likely to go into early retirement and that this relationship was fully mediated by career self-management behaviours and engagement (De Vos, 2011). In this work package, we build on these findings by studying the relationship with retirement intentions and with actual retirement behaviours at T2. Studying self-directedness among this target group is not only relevant because of the demographic changes and the need for stimulating individuals to work longer. The current cohort of older workers has "grown up" in organisations where career management was largely a responsibility of the organisation and many of them have grown together with their company. In view of this, we address whether self-directedness is also a relevant variable to address when working out policies aimed at extending the career length.

## *4. Added value*

At the *theoretical level* this study contributes to the theory building on career self-directedness by encompassing a broad and multi-dimensional conceptualisation.

At the *empirical level* we provide new insights by unraveling the antecedents and consequences of career self-directedness of employees from different age, income and educational strata, thereby responding to the call for further research on the role and relevance of career self-directedness in the contemporary career era. Most previous studies have addressed self-directedness using the over-researched target group of higher-educated employees often limited to the context of a single organisation (e.g. Sturges et al., 2010). Career researchers tend to embrace the concept of career self-directedness as a positive vehicle for career success, thereby focusing almost exclusively on its benefits. However, this study considers both the benefits and possible drawbacks by considering different subsamples of employees.

Our study also makes a *methodological* contribution by using a representative sample of the workforce in Flanders, thereby allowing to study the validity of our model for different age, income and education strata. Moreover, the longitudinal research design allows to relate self-directedness to actual career transitions over time.

## **WP 4: Career transitions from a contingency perspective: Examining factors moderating the impact of job mobility**

### *1. Objectives*

With this work package, we aim to improve our understanding of the impact of job mobility by examining the moderating effect of (a) characteristics of the transitioner (i.e. the person making the transition) and (b) features of the transition. We will look in particular at the impact of job mobility on outcomes related to “career security”: perceived employability, career self-directedness, job and career satisfaction and general well-being (health, life satisfaction). That way, this work package will not only help to improve our understanding of the impact of job mobility (Feldman & Ng, 2007; Murrell et al., 1996), but it may also shed light on the mechanisms through which people enhance their career security.

By examining whether there is a differential effect of job mobility for different groups of individuals (e.g. men vs. women; ethnic minority vs. ethnic majority; people with vs. without disability; young vs. older individuals; low vs. high educated people; low vs. high income strata), we aim to address following research questions:

- Is a transitional career "good" for some but "bad" for others? Put otherwise, can we speak of distinct classes in the labour market with variant mobility patterns and different socio-psychological characteristics? Or do perhaps all transitional careers have both positive and negative properties (e.g. higher employability along with heightened work-related stress and lower job satisfaction) (Reitzle, Körner & Vondracek, 2009)?
- In case of the presence of different types of transitional careers: what factors determine the lock-in into negatively enacted careers?
- What are the respective effects of education, competencies and meta-competencies in the light of mitigation of negative career outcomes?

We will also examine the moderating impact of two transition characteristics: (1) the magnitude of the transition, i.e. the degree to which two subsequent jobs differ from each other and (2) the voluntariness of the transition. Magnitude and voluntariness are two transition characteristics which have frequently been suggested to impact transition outcomes (Eby & Dematteo, 2000; Ostroff & Clark, 2001; Pinder & Schroeder, 1987; Nicholson, 1984). However, to date, they have not yet ('magnitude') or only in a rather narrow-minded manner ('voluntariness') been operationalized and included in previous research. In this work package, we will tackle this gap by using a theoretically-based operationalization of both moderators, i.e. interpreting them objectively as well as subjectively (Marler, Barringer & Milkovich, 2002; Peiperl, Arthur, Goffee & Morris, 2000; Valcour & Tobert, 2003), to examine the following issues:

- How “large” and “voluntary” are career transitions in Flanders, both objectively and as perceived by the individual (subjectively)? To which extent do objective and subjective evaluations of the magnitude and voluntariness of the transition correlate to each other?
- On which dimensions (e.g. change in job content; change of sector) do people in Flanders make “big” career steps; on which dimensions do we only see “small” steps? Do reorientations (i.e. big career steps) take place on a voluntary or rather on an involuntary basis?
- Do (objectively/subjectively) large transitions add to people’s career security, in particular to their employability? If so, under which conditions and for whom does this impact occur?
- Do (objectively/subjectively) voluntary career transitions contribute to people’s career security, in particular to their career self-directedness (either attitudinal or behavioural)? If so, under which conditions and for whom does this impact occur?



- Is there an interaction effect of magnitude and voluntariness? For instance, do large transitions only have a positive impact on people's career security if they were undertaken voluntarily?

The insights of this work-package may help to optimise policy initiatives aimed at stimulating and supporting individual's job mobility. In addition, this work package will inform professionals who help individuals undergoing career transitions (e.g. career counsellors, employment service and outplacement personnel) to better adapt their service to the needs and risks their clients are facing.

## 2. *Relevance*

Job mobility is at the top of the labour market policy in many European countries (Fasang et al., 2007). The rationale behind is that job mobility could raise flexibility in the labour market, contribute to job growth (Fasang et al., 2007; Mignonac & Herrbach, 2003), add to knowledge creation and diffusion (Ng et al., 2007) and reduce long-term unemployment (Sels, 2008). Also for individuals, job mobility is associated with positive outcomes (Feldman & Ng, 2007; Murrel et al., 1996). Job mobility may help people to develop a wide range of skills and competences (Campion et al., 1994; London, 1985), it could enhance their actual and perceived employability (Campion et al., 1994; Lent, Brown & Hackett, 1994) and it could improve their job and career satisfaction (Fasang et al., 2007).

However, the evidence on the effects of job mobility to date has been largely inconsistent (Mao, 2005). Accordingly, many authors have raised concerns about possible negative (side-) effects of transitional careers (De Winne, Stynen, Gilbert, & Sels, 2009; Gerber, Wittekind, Grote, & Staffebach, 2009a; Van Buren, 2003b), warning of the necessity for further research in this area. Transformations of the labour market towards increasing flexibility and growing individual responsibility entail a redistribution of risks in the society, which are bound to interact with the set of pre-existing social conditions, and more specifically with biases of distribution of work-related human capital. The burdens imposed by increased flexibility, and therefore increased instability and uncertainty will not be processed with equal success.

By shedding light on individual and transition characteristics that moderate the impact of job mobility, we aim to add to a more nuanced view on job mobility. Insights in these nuances will help to better judge the opportunities and risks of stimulating a transitional labour market in Flanders. By paying specific attention to the magnitude of transitions, this research will also add to our understanding of the value of re-orientation. This is especially important given the current policy attention to this topic (see work package 1).

## 3. *Status quaestionis*

The positive effects of transitional careers are appraised in the literature (Arthur & Rousseau, 2001; Eby, Butts, & Lockwood, 2003). However, research on the impact of career transitions has produced mixed results (Mao, 2005). This is related to the fact that different studies examine different types of job transitions (Mao, 2005; Ng et al., 2007), use too specific samples and rarely take into account the specific characteristics of the transitions (Eby & Dematteo, 2000; Fields et al., 2005). With this study, we aim to provide an explanation for these inconsistent findings so far. Using a representative sample of Flemish employees, we will examine the differential impact of inter- and intra-organisational mobility by looking at the moderating effect of (1) characteristics of the transitioner and (2) features of the transition (Eby & Dematteo, 2000; Fields, 2005; Ostroff & Clark, 2001; Pinder & Schroeder, 1987; Nicholson, 1984).

### 3.1 *Characteristics of the transitioner*

In the first instance, criteria to classify transitional careers need to be defined, based both on previous research and data sources available for analysis. These criteria need to include not only objective career outcomes (such as salary and promotion), but certain measures of subjective career success as well

(Khapova, Arthur, & Wilderom, 2007). Both negatively enacted contemporary transitional careers, as well as negative side-effects of positively enacted transitional careers form the focus of this analysis.

Aside from a general exploration, two specific groups are of particular interest in the light of the subject: lower income and lower educational strata. Research indicates that positively enacted transitional careers (specifically boundaryless and/or protean types) are more typical for individuals with higher educational levels (Gerber, et al., 2009a; Marler, Woodard Barringer, & Milkovich, 2002b), which puts their lower educated counterparts at risk of either becoming "stuck" in rigidly oriented career patterns (and thus face unemployment) or accepting subpar employment conditions (and thus face poverty). Lower income strata are seen in this context in relation to the secondary labour market. The goal of this work package is to identify career patterns specific to this group, as well as determinants of their outcomes. The positive rhetoric of the transitional careers can potentially mask the tensions and problematic career-related issues peculiar for these strata.

### *3.2 Characteristics of the transition*

To our knowledge, the magnitude between two jobs has not been previously examined as a factor moderating the effects of job mobility, although it has been cited by several authors as an explanation for differences in outcomes of various forms of mobility (Ostroff & Clark, 2001; Eby & Dematteo, 2000). In the WSE Career survey, we included a concrete, theory-based operationalisation of magnitude. This operationalisation was based upon the job embeddedness framework of Mitchell & Lee (2001). This framework maps the different aspects that attach employees to their job. Mitchell and Lee make a distinction between (1) links, (2) fit and (3) sacrifices, both (a) on the job (organisation) and (b) off the job (community). 'Links' are the relationships with others one is able to have thanks to one's job. 'Fit' refers to the compatibility between oneself and one's work and living environment. 'Sacrifices' refer to the things one has to relinquish when leaving the job (e.g. a good pension plan). The extent to which each of these aspects are changed by the job transition is likely to impact the outcomes of the transition. In addition, we regard magnitude both subjectively and objectively. Subjectively, in our conceptualization of magnitude, links, fit and sacrifices refer to the perceived changes in one's professional and social network, skills, fit with the organisation, work pressure, job security, working regime, work-home distance, etc. Objectively, links, fit and sacrifices are measured as actual changes in, a.o., work and home location, work department, function, hierarchical level, working regime and work-home distance.

The second transition characteristic which we will focus on is volition, i.e., the degree to which the transition is voluntary. The distinction between voluntary and involuntary job mobility is largely established in the turnover literature, where it has been shown to significantly impact the effects of interorganisational job changes. In research on transitions within organisations, however, this transition characteristic has – to our knowledge – not yet been taken into account. Nevertheless, also intra-organisational job transitions can be involuntary (e.g. demotion, relocation to another plant or department and other transitions initiated by the employer). Moreover, the (turnover) studies that have implemented the voluntary/involuntary distinction tend to represent it as an objective fact, based on the authority of the party that initiated the transition. We assume that the subjective experience of voluntariness also matters. To conceptualise this subjective side for the WSE Career survey, we drew on the self-determination theory (SDT), a psychological motivation theory developed by Ryan and Deci (2000). According to the SDT, the extent to which people experience volition when engaging in activities (such as a job transition) can be situated on a continuum. At one end is external regulation or compliance to external contingencies (e.g. material or social rewards and punishments), at the other end intrinsic motivation, or being guided by inner interests. Intrinsic motivation is the ultimate expression of volition. In-between are various types of extrinsic motivation characterised by gradually

increasing degrees of self-determination (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Research has extensively documented the beneficial effects of autonomous motivation, involving feelings of volition and choice, especially in the context of education and learning (e.g. Vansteenkiste et al., 2004).

#### 4. *Added value*

The added value of this work package is attributed to several points:

- The focus on the moderating factors will help explain the conflicting results presented in previous research and may help uncover the conditions under which mobility positively or negatively affects employees.
- Most research on the impact of job mobility has used samples of managers or professionals. By using a representative sample of the Flemish labour market, we will add to a more generic understanding of the impact of job mobility. In addition, by examining the differential effect for different groups of individuals, this research may shed light on the generalizability of previous research using specific samples.
- The transition characteristics, magnitude and voluntariness or volition, are interpreted objectively and subjectively, which is in line with the dual approach to careers present in current career research (e.g. Marler et al., 2002).
- Magnitude has been referred to as an explanatory factor of the effects of mobility, but has never been conceptualised in previous research. The distinction voluntary/involuntary has already been conceptualized, however, in a rather narrow-minded way. Operationalizing it as a continuum rather than as two contrasting extremes adds to the existing literature.
- Most studies on job mobility use only cross-sectional data. This technique makes it difficult to reveal the direction of the found relationships. By making use of a longitudinal data set, we will be better able to outline the direction of the causal relationships.

### **WP5: The work-life balance and household influences on career decisions**

#### 1. *Objectives*

In this work package, we plan to explore the consequences of career transitionality for work-family balance, based on the WSE Career survey. We will construct a career typology for the population in question based on (a) the observed career transitions in the period of 10 years prior to the WSE Career survey (up to 15 years depending on respondent's profile), and (b) the subjective indicators pertaining to career orientation (e.g. predisposition towards job mobility). We will explore the causal relationships between the obtained career profiles, available family data and work-life balance indicators, controlling for general socio-demographic characteristics. The effects on objective and subjective career success will be considered. The goal of this package is to understand the relationship between the career patterns that emerge in contemporary labour markets and their consequences for balancing work and family (and vice versa).

In the context of the transitional labour market the managing of the conflict between work and other life areas, such as family, leisure or education, gains increasing importance (Baruch, 2004). This phenomenon is an integral part of the new psychological contract between employers and employees (Hall & Moss, 1998), as well as changes in the meaning of work (Bauman, 2004; Rousseau, 1997). Its importance stems, among other reasons, from the diversification of the labour force, and especially the influx of women on the labour market with subsequent increase in dual-earner household share, as well as ageing of the working population, since the issues of work-life balance are critical for both groups. In the context of career studies work-life balance research derives its relevance from the influence that non-work choices exercise on career outcomes (Nikandrou, Panayotopoulou, & Apospori, 2008).

The link between work-family conflict and subjective career outcomes has been well documented. Work-family conflict is linked to low levels of job and career satisfaction, as well as perceived career success (Anderson, Coffey & Byerly, 2002; Martins, Eddleston & Veiga, 2002; Nikandrou et al., 2008). These results are consistently replicated (Kossek & Ozeki, 1998). On the other hand, the research is scarce with regard to the relationship between work-family conflict and objective career outcomes (Nikandrou, et al., 2008). The same holds for career mobility patterns as antecedent of work-family conflict (Carnicer, Sánchez, Pérez & Jiménez, 2004). A meta-study on the subject, cataloguing the predictors of work-family interaction in the empirical studies between 1980 and 2002, demonstrates the gap in the empirical findings in regard to objective career trajectory data—indicators pertaining to career mobility were found in 2 studies out of 966 (Eby, Casper, Lockwood, Bordeaux & Brinley, 2005).

*Research question(s)*

- Are transitional careers characterised by better work-family balance? What is the direction of causal effects in this regard?
- How is the relationship between transitionality and work-family balance reflect on objective and subjective career success?
- How this relationship is influenced by gender and gender-related variables?

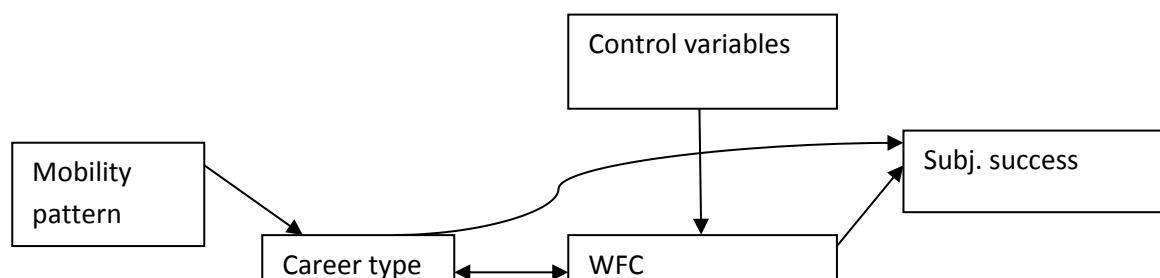
2. *Relevance*

The understanding of the link between career transitionality and family life has implications for decisions with regard to policy support of transitional careers. Those career types biased towards negative outcomes may be identified as being at risk. The direction of causality between career patterns and family indicators can determine the point of application of eventual policy instruments. Lower work-family conflict in certain career types may be a factor in increasing career activity, both in terms of labour market participation and postponement of retirement.

3. *Research themes*

In the literature on the newly emerging career patterns we find the initial evidence that certain types of contemporary transitional careers might provide favorable conditions for women seeking a mitigation of conflict between work and family (Marler, Woodard Barringer & Milkovich, 2002a; Reitman & Schner, 2003; Valcour & Tolbert, 2003; Valgaeren, 2008), without jeopardizing perceived career success (Valcour & Tolbert, 2003). On the other hand, there are indications of the consistent relationship between highly transitional careers and lower number of children per family, higher divorce rates and lower subjective career success, compared with the stable (traditional) career pattern (Kovalenko, Mortelmans, manuscript in preparation). These findings confirm the link between career mobility patterns and family indicators, and may point to heightened work-family conflict in certain career trajectories.

In this work package we seek to specify the link between career patterns and work-family conflict for Flanders, explore the logic of its causality, and explain the underlying mechanisms, thus filling the gap in the existing research. In the existing models work-family conflict is taken both as dependent variable, as well as a mediating variable between study-dependant determinant and career outcomes (Eby et al., 2005). In the current study we intend to employ the second approach, albeit considering the bi-directional causality between career types and work-family conflict. The basic conceptual model is rendered below:



This model offers several advantages. First, it conceptualises the career based on both mobility characteristics and psychological career orientations. If the effects of career orientations on work-family conflict have been established, consequences of career mobility have not been sufficiently researched (cf. supra). Second, the model employs both objective and subjective career success, an approach deemed necessary to evaluate career success in full (Khapova, et al., 2007).

Using the respondent's working history, career mobility pattern will include a variety of transitions: intra- and inter-organisational mobility, changes in part/full-time working regimes, as well as transitions between work and non-work. Average job tenure can serve as a supplementary measure. Aside from the central work-family conflict measure, control variables may include the preferred time allocation between work and non-work, distribution of household work, care for others, attitudes towards gender roles, current job characteristics and equality of income. Subjective career success will be indicated by job and career satisfaction, as well as experiences in the current job. Objective career success can be operationalised using income and promotions in the recent working history.

#### 4. *Methodological plan*

Based on the WSE Career survey data:

- Construct career pattern taxonomy, using sequence analysis (considering working regime, promotions/demotions, internal and external mobility, as well as unemployment and inactivity)
- Explore the relationship between specific career patterns with both career success (objective and subjective) and family-related variables (including work-family conflict and control variables), using causal analysis techniques (e.g. structural equation modeling)
- Consider the direction of causality and the mediating role of work-family conflict.

### **WP 6: Part-time employment at the end of the working career as a predictor of retirement behaviour**

#### 1. *Objectives*

Also at later ages, work-life conflicts exist (Yeandle, 2005). Work-life conflict (work-to-family and family-to-work conflict) at the end of the working career is an important predictor of retirement timing (Kubicek, Korunka, Hoonakker & Raymo, 2010; Raymo & Sweeney, 2006). The number of hours worked

is an important predictor of work-life conflict (Crompton & Lyonette, 2006; Dex & Bond, 2005). That is why policy makers create possibilities to work a lower amount of hours at the end of the working career in order to postpone retirement. The idea of transitional labour markets is that not only *a lower amount of hours worked*, and a lower work-life conflict, but also *the improvement of the work-life balance* by a reduction in working hours play a role in determining the retirement age. In this work package the central focus lies on the indirect and direct effects of *part-time versus full-time work on the planned and actual retirement age*. We develop a theoretical conceptual model which identifies different ways in which part-time work may influence the retirement age. Intervening effects via work-life conflict and quality of life indicators are hypothesised. The central question is whether it is true that in Flanders part-time workers at the end of their working career plan to retire later compared to full-time workers. If the assumption that part-time workers retire later is rejected, it is important to know where exactly in the causal chain this problem does arise and how this effect can be explained?

## 2. *Relevance*

In Flanders, the labour market participation of older workers is still too low. At this moment it is not yet evaluated (specifically on a micro-level) whether work-life balancing strategies at the end of the working career, such as working hours reductions, effectively lengthen the working career. In order to evaluate the working hours reduction system it is in a first step important to know why people opt for an early exit out of the labour market. More specifically we are interested in how working hours affect early retirement intentions and behaviour.

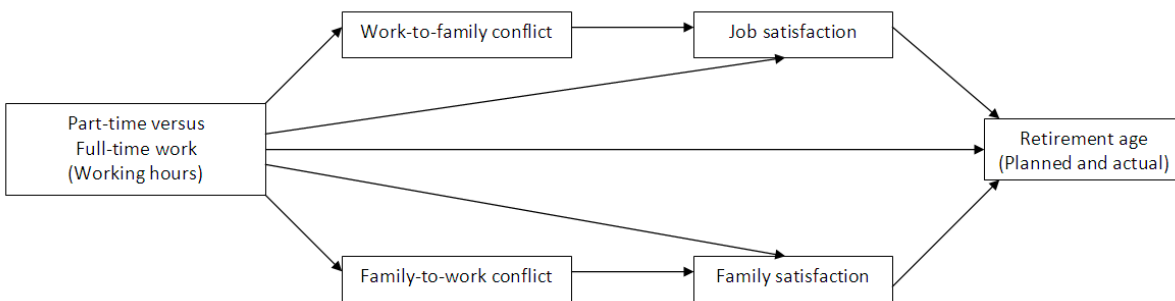
The policy relevance is also particularly fed by a widespread social debate which is going on in Belgium specifically about working hours reduction systems and part-time work opportunities for older workers. Contradictory to the theoretical strengths of transitional labour market principles, employers argue that at this moment the original purpose of working hours reduction systems and part-time work opportunities to lengthen the working career, is not (yet) obtained. Instead of postponing retirement, working hours reduction and part-time work are usually used as a “step-up” to early retirement by those who already want to retire early. According to the employers, part-time workers will not retire later, but earlier compared to full-time workers. Unions, on the other hand, argue that if an older worker lacks the willingness, capabilities (physical, mental, etc.) and/or opportunities (job availability, etc.) to stay employed longer, the individual right to rest at the end of the working career should be respected. In this paper we test whether part-time workers effectively retire earlier compared to their counterparts, and test how we could explain this ‘ineffectiveness’ from a theoretical point of view.

## 3. *Research themes*

In the literature it is often studied how work characteristics influence retirement timing. Nevertheless, the overall conclusion is that the findings of different studies were inconsistent (Henkens & Tazellar, 1997; Kim & Devaney, 2005; Kubicek, et al., 2010; Mein et al., 2000; Reitzes, Mutran, & Fernandez, 1998). Kubicek et al. (2010) argued that in order to understand the effect of different work (and family) characteristics on the retirement age, a multidimensional path model of early retirement should be developed (Kubicek, et al., 2010). This multidimensional path model includes different kinds of concepts: work (and family) characteristics, work-life conflict and quality of life indicators. The idea is that besides *raw* work and family conditions and the degree of conflict experienced between both life domains, the *individual perception* of the work (and family) conditions and the work-life conflict is an important predictor of early retirement behaviour (Korunka, Hoonakker, & Carayon, 2008). The individual perception of work (and family) conditions are measured in different quality of life measures such as health status, job satisfaction (and marital satisfaction). From the point of view of transitional labour market theories, the model is not only interesting because of its variety in the kind of concepts involved. In addition, the fact that the relationship between end-career work-life conflict and retirement timing is

conceptualised, makes this model extremely interesting to evaluate the relevance of transitional labour market theories to explain transitions in the late career. The main conclusion was that work (and family) characteristics and work-life conflict do only influence the actual retirement age in an indirect way (via the intervening effects of health status, job satisfaction and marital satisfaction). Although they did not study the influence of *working hours* or *working hours reduction* on the retirement age, they argued that “...reducing work-family conflicts by increasing workplace flexibility could help workers to meet job requirements and family demands more easily. Accepting workers’ request for less standardized working hours, telecommuting, or part-time work may provide such opportunities to combine the domains of work and family” (Kubicek et al., 2010: 490). In line with this suggestion, we test whether a reduction in working hours (part-time vs. full-time work) indeed lowers the work-life conflict and in the end increases the retirement age.

**Figure 1** Conceptual model



Only a few studies have studied the direct effect of working hours on the retirement decision (Denaeghel, Mortelmans & Borghgraef, 2011; Schils, 2008). A conceptual path model as developed in Figure 1 is not yet tested. We assume that part-time work vs. full-time work affect retirement age via the intervening effect of work-to-family conflict and job satisfaction, and family-to-work conflict and family satisfaction.

The more hours worked, the more difficult it is to combine work and life (Crompton & Lyonette, 2006; Dex & Bond, 2005). Fagnani and Letablier studied whether a reduction in working hours increased the work-life balance, suggesting a positive relationship between the number of hours worked and the degree of work-life conflict (Fagnani & Letablier, 2004). From the perspective of the division of time this positive relationship seems logical: less time spend at work does increase the time available for other activities.

Although in most studies on work-life balance no distinction is made between “work-to-family” and “family-to-work” conflict (Fagnani & Letablier, 2004), the source of the conflict could lie in the work as well as the family conditions. It is important to make a distinction between work-to-family and family-to-work conflicts because they might have different effects on retirement behaviour (Kubicek, et al., 2010). There is a work-to-family conflict when there is a perceived spill-over of stress from the work into the family domain (Raymo & Sweeney, 2006). A family-to-work conflict arises when it is the other way around (Raymo & Sweeney, 2006). *We hypothesize that part-time workers have a lower work-to-family and family-to-work conflict compared to full-time workers* (Dex & Bond, 2005). This hypothesis is based on the transitional labour market theory which aims to improve work-life balance by working a reduced amount of hours. We assume that less time spend at work goes hand in hand with less pressure from

physical and psycho-emotional job demands on family domains (work-to-family conflict), but also with less pressure from family demands (caregiving responsibilities for grandchildren, ill spouse, etc.) on the work domain (family-to-work conflict) simply because the older worker has more time to meet family demands.

A lower work-to-family conflict increases job satisfaction (Kubicek, et al., 2010) and in turn decreases the early retirement probability (Clark, Oswald & Warr, 1996; Hanisch & Hullin, 1991; Kubicek et al., 2010; Reitzes et al., 1998). A lower family-to-work conflict, on the contrary, probably enhances early retirement as a consequence of higher family satisfaction. Being more satisfied with the familial situation (satisfactory partner relationship etc.) may hasten the transition into retirement because older workers want to spend more time together with their partners and family (Szinovacz & Deviney, 2000). If working hours are found to influence family-to-work conflict and/or increase family satisfaction, this might probably explain why part-time employees retire earlier than full-time workers. The question remains open whether the WSE-data actually support this hypothesis.

With the help of a direct effect we test whether part of the effect of part-time work on retirement age might be explained by a decreased work-life conflict and increased job and family satisfaction. According to Schils (2008) a higher amount of working hours indicates a stronger commitment to work, due to preferences for work or due to a higher income need (Schils, 2008). As a consequence, individuals who are working more hours will retire later. Probably specific characteristics of part-time workers (work attitudes) may explain why part-time employees may retire earlier compared to full-time workers.

From a theoretical view contradictory hypotheses about the effect of part-time work on retirement age could be formulated. By testing the conceptual model we will evaluate whether indirect as well as direct effects of working hours on retirement age exist and which effect is the strongest.

#### *4. Methods*

We will use structural equation modeling. In a first stage confirmatory factor analysis will be done. Latent concepts of different work-to-family and family-to-work items available in the WSE career survey will be developed and their reliability and validity will be tested. In a second stage those latent concepts will be brought into a path model (structural equation model) in order to test the direct and indirect effects hypothesized. Different control variables such as income, educational attainment, etc. will be brought in to the model (Beehr, Glazer, Nielson & Framer, 2000).

By comparing (planned/actual) retirement ages between part-time and full-time workers, controlled for different background variables, we aim to get an idea whether a reduced amount of working hours might lengthen the working career.

### **WP 7: An international comparison of career transitionality patterns: the interplay of gender, career outcomes and covariates.**

#### *1. Introduction*

In this work package, we plan to explore the consequences and covariates of transitional career patterns, based on European data (SHARELIFE). We will (1) make an international comparison with regard to the distribution of specific career patterns, characterised by varying degrees of mobility and the allocation of its timing. Subsequently we plan to (2) compare individuals in different career pattern groups for family variables (marital stability, children), career success indicators, as well as career overall length (years gainfully employed) and retirement age. The effects and relationships for both sexes will be estimated separately in order to capture the differences stemming from gender mediation.



The traditional, linear career pattern has undergone significant erosion in the last decennia (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996a; Baruch, 2006; Hall, 2002). As labour markets become transformed by the processes of globalisation, feminisation and diversification of labour supply, tertiarisation of the economy, proliferation of new technologies, as well as changes in learning requirements, fundamentally new career patterns emerge. The initial tone of the discourse regarding this new phenomenon was largely humanist-inspired, balancing the increased personal responsibility for career management with the emphasis on self-directedness of career development based on one's own goals, strategic value of flexibility, the ability to move between jobs without sacrificing career quality and subjectively defined criteria of career success, in line with one's personal values.

For its largest part the literature around the new career models shares that tone (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996b; Hall, 1996). Nevertheless, as the amount of empirical research on the subject grew, an issue was taken with the possible neglect of negative aspects of transitional careers (Gerber, Wittekind, Grote & Staffebach, 2009b; Van Buren, 2003a). The most immediate point of critique applies to their inherent instability, the success of coping with which can be unequally distributed, biased towards those with higher levels of educational, social and economic capital. Some labour market strata would enjoy more of the positive effects of transitionality, e.g. those in executive/managerial careers (Cheramie, Sturman & Walsh, 2007; Ensher, Murphy & Sullivan, 2002), while others will have to deal with its less pleasant consequences, such as heightened stress or unstable continuity of work (King, Burke & Pemberton, 2005; Reitman & Schneer, 2003).

The contemporary empirical research on transitional career characteristics suggests that different career patterns are tied to variant career outcomes, e.g. in terms of income, career satisfaction and family variables (Eby, 2001; Eby, Butts & Lockwood, 2003; Gerber, et al., 2009b; Marler, et al., 2002a; Valcour & Tolbert, 2003; Volmer & Spurk, 2010). There is evidence that certain types of contemporary transitional careers might provide favorable conditions for women seeking a mitigation of conflict between work and family (Marler, et al., 2002a), without jeopardizing perceived career success (Valcour & Tolbert, 2003). Nevertheless this finding has not been consistently replicated in similar studies. In addition, Kovalenko & Mortelmans (manuscript in preparation) find that highly transitional career patterns are tied to negative outcomes in terms of mentioned family indicators.

Research on career success in transitional careers renders mixed results as well. In general, it can be argued, that in comparison with their traditional counterparts, transitional careers are characterised by higher degree of objective career success in terms of wages and benefits (Gerber, et al., 2009b; Marler, et al., 2002a; Volmer & Spurk, 2010), at the same time being linked with lower subjective career success (Eby, 2001; Gerber, et al., 2009b). Here too the results are inconsistent across studies. Moreover, a large part of the data regarding transitional careers originates from the Anglo-Saxon countries, whereas studies in continental Europe are scarce. This consideration is especially important, considering the differences in welfare mechanisms, labour market specifics and culture between European countries. Segers et al. (2008) find substantial differences between European countries concerning the prevalence of the transitional career type. Differences in the interaction between both career types and their covariates can be expected as well. In addition, gender is found to substantially mediate the effects on career success (Cinamon & Rich, 2002; Clark, 1997; Forret, Sullivan & Mainiero, 2010; Sullivan & Mainiero, 2007).

## 2. *Research questions*

The following questions motivate the analyses:

- What career types can be discovered in terms of transitionality in the European countries? What are the differences between welfare state types and geographical regions?

- What are the differences between men and women?
- Are career patterns cohort-dependent?
- What differences between career types can be discerned in terms of family indicators, career success and career activity indicators?
- What is the direction of causality between career patterns and these differences?

### 3. *Relevance*

Differences in career outcomes have consequences for the policy measures aimed to regulate and/or support specific career patterns. Since contemporary labour markets are marked by heightened mobility, (hyper)transitional careers are bound to gain importance. Preliminary findings suggest, that (hyper)transitional careers entail both positive and negative differences in comparison with the stable traditional working trajectories. Their repercussions and interrelations with other life domains must therefore be carefully studied.

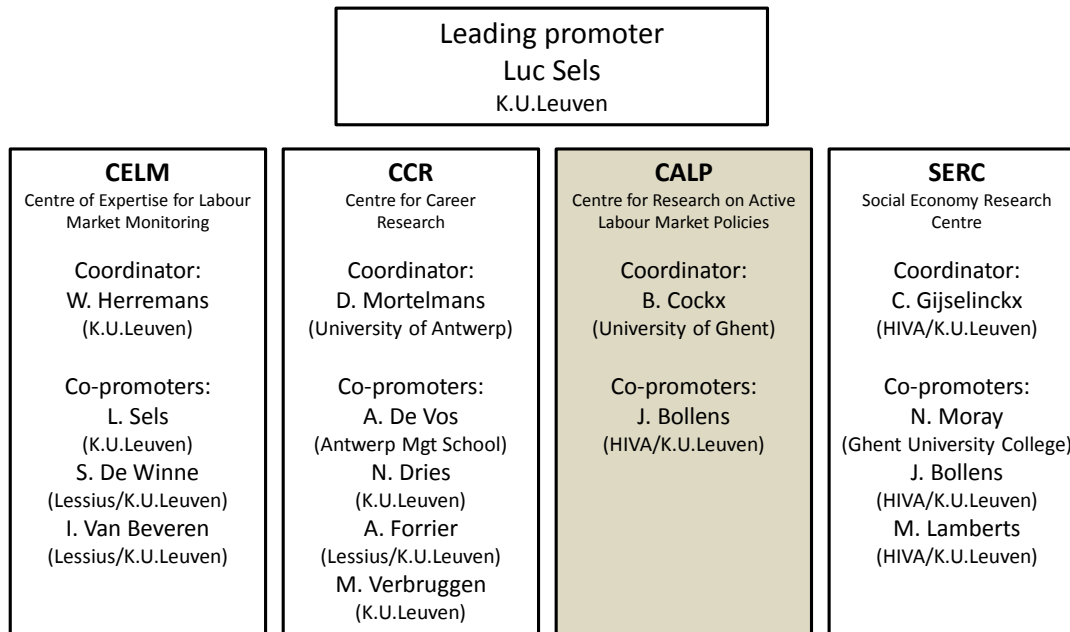
The relevance of this analysis is also in the comparison of Flanders with other regions of Belgium and other European countries in terms of outcomes of career transitions, as well as prevalence of traditional and transitional career types. The analysis will help discern the institutional and cultural factors, that shape post-traditional careers—a thread of research that is currently missing from the empirical agenda (see Briscoe, Hall & Mayrhofer, 2011).

### 4. *Methodological plan*

SHARE and SHARELIFE data will be used, covering thirteen European countries:

- A career taxonomy will be constructed using sequencing/clustering methods (OMA/Ward). Sequence statuses will entail: inactivity, unemployment, employment (with respect to position in overall career), retirement. Both genders will receive separate classifications; due to large differences in career patterns and the logic of work-family interaction, the models need to be distinct.
- The prevalence of different career types (along with the male breadwinner model) will be explored per country, with a closer look at the alternative forms of careers and their outcomes. Objective job mobility will be supplemented with a qualitative indicator to distinguish between internal and external loci of career transitionality control, in line with the theory of protean and boundaryless careers (Briscoe, Hall & DeMuth, 2006).
- Additional descriptive analyses will be made, with regard to common socio-demographic variables (e.g. age, education)
- The differences between career types will be analyzed using ANOVA:
  - Number of children per family
  - Divorces (as a measure of marital stability)
  - Marriages
  - Objective (when possible) and subjective career success indicators
  - Retirement age and career activity.
- Causal analysis will be considered depending on the findings.

## C. CALP – Centre for Research on Active Labour Market Policies



### Introduction

Due to population ageing the financial sustainability of the Welfare State is under pressure in most European countries and this is not different for Flanders. The increasing costs of pensions and growing demand of labour intensive health care services induced by this population ageing cannot be fully absorbed by a higher productivity growth alone. It is essential to complement this strategy of productivity growth by a maximal deployment of the available labour resources. This has been recognized by the European Union (EU) since at least the Luxembourg summit in 1997 and has been reconfirmed in March 2011 by the setting of the so called “European 2020 Employment Targets”. In Europe as a whole the average employment rate of those aged 20 to 64 should increase to 75% by 2020. The Flemish government has been even more ambitious by setting this goal to 76%. Given an employment rate of 71.8% in 2010 this means that the employment rate should increase yearly by 0.5 percentage points.

In order to realize this objective employment policy must be designed as efficiently as possible, so that these targets can be attained with a minimum of resources. This requires in the first place the accumulation of knowledge on which policies work best. Within the previous Policy Research Centre (“Steunpunt”) of Employment and Social Economy of the Flemish government this accumulation of knowledge has broken ground by gathering appropriate data, reviewing the relevant international scientific literature and by evaluating by state-of-the-art micro-econometric methods a subset of Active

Labour Market Policies (ALMP) that have been implemented by the Flemish Public Employment Agency (VDAB). Within this new Policy Research Centre of Employment that is proposed here this accumulation of knowledge is consolidated and further developed. Furthermore, it is the ambition to transmit part of this knowhow to employees of VDAB such that they would become less dependent on external researchers for some basic insights in the effectiveness of particular ALMP.

The consolidation of this knowledge is guaranteed by integrating the researchers of the previous Policy Research Centre within this new proposal. The further development of knowledge is spurred by the integration of a new partner of Ghent University with ample scientific experience in the evaluation of ALMP in the Centre and by aiming at getting experience in modern evaluation methods, such as the “timing of events” method and “regression discontinuity design”, that haven’t been used in the past. The transmission of knowledge is stimulated by testing out a new simple evaluation method that has been recently proposed in the literature and by aiming at making this new simple evaluation method available to field workers. More details on this idea are provided in the first “work package” (WP1) below.

The scope of the new policy centre is broadened. First, traditionally ALMP concern policies that aim at getting unemployed workers back to work. However, it can be argued policies that *prevent* the dismissal of employees threatened with redundancy and policies that encourage employees to delay their retirement should be considered as well. Indeed, this wider definition is particularly relevant if we are interested in raising the employment rates of older workers, a focus that is justified in view of the extreme low employment rates of older workers in Flanders. In 2010 the employment rate of workers aged between 55 and 64 was only 38,2% against the EU27 average of 46,3%<sup>6</sup>. For these reasons we focus in work package 3 (WP3) on the evaluation of two policy measures that have been implemented to keep older individuals at work: wage subsidies targeted workers older than 56 and outplacement to those older than 45.

Second, the scope of the new policy centre is also broadened by not only studying the effectiveness of particular policy measures, but also the effectiveness of the delivery mode. Since 2005 part of activation services (such as counselling and training) that traditionally the Public Employment Agency, VDAB, provided to the unemployed are publicly procured to private non- and for-profit organizations. In work package 2 (WP2) we propose to evaluate this new delivery mode with a focus on the question whether the type of service provider (for-profit, not-for-profit or public) plays a role.

The new policy centre also aims at evaluating two more traditional policy instruments: training and vacancy referrals in work package 4 and 5 (WP4 and WP5). Training programmes for unemployed workers are among the most expensive ALMP. Because of their cost it is crucial to identify whether they are worth their investment. The international scientific literature has recently shown that positive effect of training are often only realized in the long-run. The proposed research will take this into account by integrating long-term labour market outcomes among the evaluation criteria.

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.steunpuntwse.be/view/nl/18767>.

Second, although vacancy referrals are widely used by Public Employment Agencies, remarkably little is known on their effectiveness, even from an international perspective. We therefore propose to focus on the evaluation of this ALMP in order to fill this gap.

In order to raise the global employment rate it will be essential to raise the employment rate of groups that are traditionally less successful on the labour market. We already mentioned the group of older workers. The labour market integration of other disadvantaged groups, such as the low-skilled, non-EU migrants and the disabled, is equally important. One of the recurring themes throughout the various work packages is the attention for the specific position of disadvantaged groups.

Finally, policy interests and relevance changes over time. In order to accommodate with these changes, the research centre will provide permanent scientific support for specific questions on ALMP that policy makers are interested in (WP6).

The proposed research is organized according to six work packages:

WP1. A simple monitoring instrument for the effectiveness of active labour market policies (ALMP)

WP2. Public Procurement of Employment Services: Long-Run Effectiveness and the Role of the Service Provider

WP3. Encouraging active ageing

WP4. The effectiveness of training

WP5. Effectiveness of job vacancy referrals

WP6. Scientific service provision

In the sequel each of these work packages are described in more detail.

## **WP1. A simple monitoring instrument for the effectiveness of active labour market policies (ALMP)**

### *1. Research question*

In Belgium in 2009 1.1% of GDP was spent on ALMP.<sup>7</sup> This was the highest level of spending in the European Union (EU). In order to ensure that this money is well spent a simple reliable monitoring instrument is essential. The selection problem makes it, however, notoriously difficult to get an unbiased estimate of the effect of ALMP on labour market outcomes. The selection problem occurs because participants in ALMP are not comparable to non-participants, so that the differential outcome between participants and non-participants may be attributed to differences in intrinsic employability of these two groups rather than to the policy itself. In order to solve this problem an abundant scientific literature has emerged (see Heckman et al., 1999 for a survey). From this literature follows that there is no standardised nor simple solution to the selection problem. In general, very sophisticated methods have been proposed which are often too complicated to explain to laymen. Consequently, it is difficult to provide field workers and policy makers with a simple and reliable instrument to evaluate the effectiveness of their actions. Lalive et al. (2011) recently proposed a new approach which deals with this problem. In this research we propose to implement this new approach to the evaluation of ALMP supplied to unemployed workers by the Flemish Public Employment Service (VDAB). In addition, by coupling this instrument with the monitoring of expenditures on the ALMP under evaluation, we intend to develop a relatively simple measurement scheme of cost-effectiveness for ALMP.

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<sup>7</sup> Source: [http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics\\_explained/index.php/Labour\\_market\\_policy\\_expenditure](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Labour_market_policy_expenditure)

As a by-product of this research, this study also aims at getting a better understanding of the impact of a reporting scheme (attached to the new monitoring instrument) on the transition rate from unemployment to employment. The mere presence of a reporting scheme may indeed modify the job search behaviour of the unemployed, since they are get a sense of being followed-up more closely. This would provide evidence of the so-called Hawthorne effect.

## 2. *(Policy-)relevance*

The design of a reliable monitoring instrument that measures the cost-effectiveness of ALMP relatively rapidly in an intelligible way is a very valuable policy instrument, since ALMP are in general very costly and a lot of money can therefore be saved by rapidly detecting ineffective policies. Moreover, since the instrument is simple, it can, after a test period, be easily implemented by the administrators of VDAB without intensive support of research experts.

## 3. *Status quaestionis and added value*

The key added value of the proposed instrument is that it combines reliability with simplicity. Existing monitoring instruments are either not reliable, since they fail to solve the selection problem or they are too complex to provide clear and timely information to policy makers. This new policy tool has only been proposed very recently (Lalivé et al., 2011). Consequently, it still may have to be tested thoroughly and refined before its reliability can be ascertained on a sound scientific basis. Moreover, the instrument may not be appropriate for all ends. For instance, it may be a good instrument in terms of predicting the effectiveness in terms of the likelihood of getting a job, but not necessarily of its quality. It will therefore by all means need to be complemented by other evaluation tools.

## 4. *Methodology and data*

Heckman et al. (1999) pointed out that “the best solution to the evaluation problem lies in improving the quality of the data on which evaluations are conducted and not in the development of formal econometric methods to circumvent inadequate data.” The innovation of the new approach of Lalivé et al. (2011) is indeed not the statistical method but the use of new indicators.

The idea consists in collecting for a sample of entrants into unemployment three indicators of job search over a predefined period: (i) the number of applications per week (largely determined by the search intensity of the worker, the supply side), (ii) the weekly probability of a job interview with an employer (largely determined by the employer, i.e. the demand side), and the product of these two indicators which results in (iii) the number of job interviews per week. The last mentioned indicator is presumably the one in which the policy makers are most interested, since it is closely related to the outcome of interest, the probability of being hired in a job. Lalivé et al. argue this latter point convincingly in their section 8: the chances of obtaining a job, given an interview, are 50%. Moreover, “it is difficult to envisage a characteristic which has a positive impact on getting to an interview, but then a negative one on getting the job (or the other way round)”. The calculated effects on the probability of a job interview can therefore be taken as a lower bound of the overall effect on getting a job (Ibid, p. 31).

The reason why this simplifies the analysis dramatically is that one can observe for the same individual multiple outcomes of these indicators over time. One just needs to analyse the partial correlation between a time-varying explanatory variable of interest, say participation in ALMP, and the outcome indicator, say the number of job interviews per week, in deviation from its individual mean over time. The idea is that a fixed individual determinant of the outcome, observed or not, affects the average level of the outcome indicator over time, but it cannot affect the variation around this level. The “unbiased” effect, “free of selection bias”, of ALMP participation on the number of job interviews, can therefore be found by investigating whether individuals obtain during (or after) participation in ALMP more job

interviews than on average throughout their unemployment spell. If so, ALMP is clearly effective in raising the employment chances.<sup>8</sup>

One can easily find this unbiased effect by linearly regressing, for each week within an unemployment spell, the number of job interviews, in deviation from the individual mean, on an indicator of participation in ALMP within this week and a number of additional time-varying determinants of a job interview within this week, such as the elapsed unemployment duration and the local unemployment rate. Moreover, by interacting the participation indicator with individual characteristics of the unemployed worker (gender, level of education, nationality, etc.), one can easily verify whether the policy is more or less effective for certain target groups. Finally, note, once the explanatory variables of this regression are clearly defined, such a regression analysis does not require any advanced expertise and can therefore be easily executed and interpreted by administrators once the appropriate data are delivered.

The data consist of a random sample of individual entrants in unemployment (and registered by the VDAB). These individuals are followed for at least 6 months, but ideally for a longer period. At regular points of time (e.g. weekly<sup>9</sup>) one asks all individuals who are still unemployed to report the timing of all job applications and the job interviews that they realised in the preceding period. Since the aim is to provide a practical policy instrument that can be implemented by employees of VDAB, it is desirable that this information is directly collected by the VDAB rather than by the researchers. Moreover, in this way anonymity can be guaranteed, since the VDAB can withhold confidential information from the researchers. These data are complemented by the timing and type of participation in ALMP and of transition out of unemployment, and by some objective individual characteristics, as to investigate whether the effectiveness of ALMP varies across these characteristics. This complementary information can be extracted from the standard administrative information that VDAB collects for all its unemployed clients.

In order to study the aforementioned Hawthorne effect, we propose to analyse a second independent random sample of entrants in unemployment for which we do not collect the information regarding the new indicators, but only the standard administrative information. By contrasting the transition rates to unemployment between these two samples, we can identify the causal impact of information collection on the job search behaviour of the unemployed.

## **WP2. Public Procurement of Employment Services: Long-Run Effectiveness and the Role of the Service Provider**

### *1. Research question*

Since 2005 the Flemish Government publicly procures part of the provision of employment services to unemployed workers to private non- and for-profit organisations (NPO and FPO). The argument that private entrepreneurs have stronger incentives to invest in cost saving technologies and quality improving innovations motivates the contracting out of these services (Grossman & Hart 1986; Hart 1995; Hart & Moore, 1990; Besley & Ghatak, 2001). However, when quality is imperfectly observable, incentives to engage in pure cost reduction, with little or no regard to quality improvement, may be too strong (Hart et al., 1997; Shleifer, 1998). This latter proviso is particularly relevant in the case of

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<sup>8</sup> Effectiveness does not imply efficiency, since, even if the ALMP raise the employment chances, this may be too costly. Efficiency can only be measured if the effectiveness is related to the cost of the provision of ALMP.

<sup>9</sup> Alternatively, one can consider longer time intervals and ask retrospectively for the timing of applications and interviews. This increases the risk of measurement error, however.

procurement of employment services. For, the employment chances of individuals are influenced by multiple unobserved determinants, which makes it notoriously difficult to distinguish between the intrinsic employability of the person to whom the services are provided and the capacity of the services to durably enhance this employability.<sup>10</sup> In this case public procurement may lead to some form of cream-skimming (or parking<sup>11</sup>) by which private organisations provide less services to hard-to-place clients in order to increase without any effort the (job) placement rates to which their pay is related. Public administrations and NPO may then outperform FPO, since, in contrast to FPO, these organisational forms may manage to hire employees with a mission that coincides with the programme's objective, e.g. to durably increase the labour market position of hard-to-place clients (Heckman et al., 1996; Besley & Ghatak, 2005).

Disentangling whether the organisation type (NPO, FPO or public agency) matters for the provision of employment services is the main objective of this research. We will focus in particular on whether the organisational type matters for the attainment of the short-term, as measured by (job) placement ratios, and longer-term goals of these services, as measured by the enhancement of employment retention and long-run earning gains. It is important to note that these longer-term goals may bear little relation to the short-term job placement rates that are used to align the incentives of service providers to policy objectives (Heckman et al., 2002). A subordinate objective is to explore whether short-term performance indicators exist that are related to long-term indicators of success: if so, the use of these short-term indicators increases efficiency of the public procurement.

A more general objective of this research aims at getting a better insight in the relationship between the design of procurement contracts and the performance of these contracts in terms of realised labour market outcomes for the clients of these services. More particularly, it will be investigated to what extent service providers can game the rules as to artificially increase their measured performance and how this gaming can be avoided. This will be realised by a literature review<sup>12</sup> as well as by the development of new (possibly experimental) research designs that are required to study these questions.

## 2. *(Policy-)relevance*

It is estimated that between 2006 and 2012 Flanders will have publicly procured employment services for nearly 12 million €/year, covering nearly 13% of the counselling trajectories offered to unemployed workers (Idea Consult et al., 2009, p. 27). In view of the magnitude of the resources involved, it is essential to know whether this procurement increases the efficiency of service provision. In addition, it will inform whether it makes sense to restrict the procurement to particular type of organisations: NPO or FPO. Finally, this research may be a starting point for the development of expertise in Flanders on how procurement contracts should be designed such that they align with longer-term employment policy objectives.

## 3. *Status quaestionis and added value*

Much of economic research has focused on understanding to what extent the difficulty of sharply defining performance indicators has led employment service providers to game the performance based contracts as to influence measured labour market performance instead of the outcomes at which the policy maker aims (see e.g. Koning & Heinrich, 2010 for a recent review). In general some evidence for

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<sup>10</sup> See also the discussion on this point in the discussion of research proposal 1.

<sup>11</sup> *Parking* is a form of cream-skimming *during* the program, in which providers try to maximize placement rates and keep costs down by focusing resources on the most able clients while doing little to serve those with the poorest job prospects.

<sup>12</sup> See Koning and Heinrich (2010) for a recent survey of this literature.



gaming activity is found, but in contrast to theoretical expectations, this only has a limited impact on labour market outcomes.

Studies on the effectiveness of contracting out employment services are still relatively scarce. Moreover, a major concern is that most of these studies (e.g. Winterhager, 2006; Winterhager et al., 2006; Bernard & Wolff, 2008) control for the selection of clients by the propensity score matching method: this method takes the selection of program participants on observable characteristics into account, but ignores the likely selection on unobservables. An exception is the recent study of Bennemarker et al. (2009) that is based on a social experiment in Sweden in which the selection problem is resolved by random assignment of program participants to the competing public or private employment services. This study did not find a global effect of contracting out, but identified substantial heterogeneity of the effects depending on client characteristics.

Koning (2008) studies the relative effectiveness of NPO and FPO, while ongoing research of Behagel et al. (2011) compare the efficiency of public and private employment services. Koning (2008) finds evidence that in The Netherlands FPO engage more in cream-skimming than NPO, but this does not result in significantly different placement rates. Behagel et al. by contrast conclude on the basis of a large scale social experiment in France that both organisation types increase the job finding rate by 15 to 35%, but also that the public provider, as compared to the private providers, increases the employment rate of its clients twice as much.

For Flanders, Devisscher et al. (2009) evaluated the first public procurement of counselling and training services that was targeted to a specific disadvantaged group of long-term unemployed workers. This evaluation controlled for the selection on a limited number of observable characteristics, but ignored selection on unobservables. In this research we aim at re-evaluating the effectiveness of this procurement, while explicitly taking selection on unobservables into account. The interest in this procurement is that it allows to simultaneously evaluate the relative effectiveness of three types of organisations (public, FP and NP) that were serving the same group of clients. In addition, this research will contribute to the international literature by considering long-term labour market performance indicators alongside short-term indicators.

#### 4. *Methodology and data*

The aforementioned first public procurement of employment services between 2005 and 2009 in Flanders was initially targeted to a group of workers who did not have any contact with the public employment agency during a pre-specified number of months, and who, depending on their age, were unemployed during more than 15 or 21 months. Subsequently, caseworkers assigned the clients to external providers according some prescribed criteria involving some degree of subjective appreciation.<sup>13</sup> However, since the target group dried up relatively quickly, this group was later extended by two additional groups of long-term unemployed workers (see Devisscher et al., 2009, p. 78 for details).

The choice of the provider in this assignment process was only partly objective (Devisscher et al., 2009, p. 99-100). Consequently, the researcher must explicitly model this assignment process as to account for possible selection on the basis of observable and unobservable characteristics of clients. We propose to model this assignment process in two steps. First, we determine according to objective criteria (age, unemployment duration, duration of client-caseworker contact, ...) the population eligible for outsourcing. This can be realised within the administrative client registration scheme of the public

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<sup>13</sup> Note that the public employment agency assigned clients to external providers who could only very exceptionally refuse clients. Consequently, cream-skimming should rather take the form of parking.

employment agency (CVS). Second, since within the CVS the timing of the internal and external services offered to clients is registered, we can use the timing-of-events method (Abbring & van den Berg, 2003) to model the (partly subjective) assignment process of employment services to operators jointly with the particular labour market outcomes of interest (job placement, employment duration and earnings).<sup>14</sup>

The data consist of the CVS of the Flemish public employment office. In order to construct long-term labour market performance indicators these data will be matched to the Labour Market and Social Protection Datawarehouse. The Datawarehouse contains administrative information originating from the diverse Social Security institutions which allows to reconstruct, from 1998 onwards, the quarterly labour market positions (including gross wage earnings) of the Belgian labour force. In order to realize this match, a formal authorization request will be submitted to the Crossroads Bank for Social Security ([www.ksz-bcss.fgov.be](http://www.ksz-bcss.fgov.be)).

Finally, during the course of the program it will be investigated whether the Flemish authorities are interested in mounting a social experiment in which the selection problem would be solved by random assignment. This could open a pathway to a simpler and more transparent evaluation. In addition, in contrast to a non-experimental setting, the researcher can design a social experiment such that it answers the specific questions in which the evaluator is interested and which may be crucial for further improving the efficiency of the outsourcing scheme.

### **WP3. Encouraging active ageing**

#### *1. Research question*

According to the Europe 2020 targets, by the year 2020 member states of the EU should attain an employment rate of at least 75% for the age group 20-64. The Flemish Government chose to do even better, and aims at an employment level of 76% to be attained by the year 2020 (Vlaams Hervormingsprogramma voor Europa 2020). In 2010 Flanders had an employment rate of 66,3% according to LFS-figures (Steunpunt WSE), with huge differences between the age groups. For the age group 25-49, Flanders attained in 2010 an employment rate of 86,6%, which is the highest score of the 27 EU member states, suggesting that for this subgroup not much progress can be made. For the age group 50-64 on the other hand, the Flemish employment rate of 53,1% in 2010 is well below the EU27-average. The difference is even more outspoken for the age group 55-64: whereas the Flemish employment rate in 2010 is merely 38,2%, the results of "neighbouring" countries show that a much higher rate is attainable : France is doing only slightly better (39,7%), but the Netherlands (53,7%), the UK (57,1%), Denmark (57.6%) and Germany (57,7%) indeed have a markedly better rate, while countries such as Norway (68,6), Switzerland (70,5%) and Sweden (70,5%) show that age does not even needs to be an obstacle for labour market participation.

Reaching the overall employment rate of 76% therefore implies in the first place increasing the employment rate for the age group 50-64. This will prove to be a big challenge, as not only labour market institutions have to be changed, but also change is required in the culture of labour market participation, after several decades with low participation rates above the age of 55. This obviously will require a multilevel strategy, inducing change in policies regarding such diverse elements as retirement regulation and other labour market institutions (Behagel, 2007; Behagel et al., 2008; Hairault et al., 2010; Heywood & Siebert 2009; Ilmakunnas & Takala 2005; Ilmakunnas & Ilmakunnas 2011; Martins et al., 2009; Saint-Paul, 2009), the activation of the older unemployed (Bollens, 2011; Kyrrä & Ollikainen,

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14 This can be realised within a multi-state duration model following the methods described in Cockx *et al.* (2010), Cockx and Picchio (2011a, b).

2008; Kyrrä & Wilke, 2007), the quality and attractiveness of working (Siegrist et al., 2006), age specific human resource and training practices (Adams, 2004), and relative wage cost (Boockman et al., s.d.; Schünemann et al., 2011).

Given the sheer volume and the urgency of the policy challenge at hand, knowing which policies effectively contribute to an increasing employment rate for older workers, is welcome. In this work package, the effectiveness of the outplacement instrument will be evaluated. The outplacement instrument supports older employees threatened with dismissal in their search for another job.

## 2. *(Policy-)relevance*

Outplacement is a service that aims to find a suitable job for a redundant employee as soon as possible. It includes psychological support and job counseling, but also logistic and administrative support. For some specific categories of employees, this service is paid for by the former employer.

In the case of individual and collective layoffs, the employer is obliged to offer outplacement to employees older than 45 with at least one year seniority. In case of collective dismissals, this is implemented by setting up an employment unit ("tewerkstellingscel"), where participants will be offered outplacement services during at least 60 hours, during at least 6 months.

As this relates to several thousand participants yearly, it is clear that the total cost of this policy is not negligible. Therefore it is important to assess the effectiveness of this policy.

## 3. *Methodology*

We want to identify policies that effectively contribute to an increasing employment rate for older workers. Within the Flemish (and Belgian) labour market policies, there are quite a few policies which potentially affect the employment rate and which are targeted to older workers. However, not all policies lend themselves readily to a rigorous micro-econometric non-experimental evaluation.

One such evaluation approach that is specifically attractive in the given context, is the Regression Discontinuity (RD) design. This method is currently recommended in the evaluation literature (Lee & Lemieux, 2010). A RD design exploits a discontinuity in the relationship between a continuous "forcing variable" and the assignment to policy participation. For example, if the policy is targeted to workers above a certain age, this induces a discontinuous relationship between the forcing variable, i.e. age, and participation. If this discontinuity is reproduced in the relationship between age and the outcome variable, for instance the rate of withdrawal from the labour force, this is proof that the policy affects the outcome if, in the absence of the policy, the relationship between age and the outcome is continuous.

Several existing policies are only eligible to individuals above a certain age. Nevertheless, a RD design is not always valid, mainly for the following reasons: (i) if the effect is not immediate, the age threshold will not generate a discontinuity in the outcome, since as younger individuals grow older they are also affected by the policy; (ii) individuals may anticipate the change in regime at the threshold, meaning that the policy affects behaviour below the age threshold; (iii) if the age threshold not only induces whether or not one is assigned to policy participation, but also induces other abrupt differences between those above and those under the threshold, it is not longer possible to isolate the contribution of policy participation from the contribution of those other differences, implying that, even if one finds a discontinuity in the relation between age and the outcome, one can never be sure whether this was due to the policy or due to the other differences.

The outplacement policy possibly is a suitable candidate for applying a RD design. In the case of individual layoffs, the employer is obliged to offer outplacement to employees older than 45 with at

least one year seniority. There is no such obligation when firing employees under 45. Regarding collective dismissals a few changes were implemented by the Economic Recovery Law. Up to April 2009, the obligation to set up an employment unit (and pay for outplacement) only applied to dismissed workers over 45, with at least one year of seniority, and for firms that asked for an early retirement at reduced age. This possibly creates a discontinuity between the workers over 45 and those under 45, although in any event this discontinuity is "fuzzy" (as opposed to a "sharp" discontinuity): it cannot be excluded that also workers younger than 45 participated in an outplacement.

The economic recovery law extended the obligation to set up an employment unit (and to pay for outplacement) in case of collective dismissals to all dismissed employees, irrespective of their age or seniority. Firms employing less than 21 employees are exempted. On this threshold, again there might be a "fuzzy" discontinuity. Both of these changes in the implementation of outplacement might present us with the opportunity to use RD to evaluate the effectiveness of outplacement as a measure to stimulate work-to-work transitions.

However, there remains some uncertainty as to whether the exact regulations and the available data indeed justify this approach. Therefore we will start with a feasibility study which has three possible outcomes : (1) the RD design indeed can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of outplacement; (2) applying RD is not feasible or not desirable, but another evaluation method can be proposed; (3) the regulation and available data do not allow to evaluate the effectiveness of outplacement, and therefore another policy will have to be selected.

This work package will be executed in conjunction with the VIONA outplacement-research <sup>15</sup> , so as to avoid overlap and in order to create synergy.

#### **WP4. The effectiveness of training**

##### *1. Research question*

Within the labour market policy expenditures of the Flemish Government, the provision of vocational training for the unemployed is definitely one of the more important programmes, both in terms of expenditures and of participants (Eurostat, 2010). Moreover, for the coming period a reinforcement of vocational training policies is announced (Vlaams Hervormingsprogramma Europa, 2020, p. 76). The Flemish labour market is characterised by high vacancy rates that coincide with persistent unemployment levels. As this is believed to be the consequence of skill mismatch (Beleidsnota Werk 2009-2014), it seems that an adequate response is to upgrade and adjust skills by the provision of training to the unemployed.

At first sight, this evolution seems to run counter to a huge amount of research on the effectiveness of training programs, which shows rather mixed results: treatment effects are found to be absent, negative or at most modestly positive (Kluve, 2007, Card et al., 2010; Kluve, 2010). However, there is growing evidence that these modest effects are primarily due to the fact that this literature is limited to an evaluation of the short term effects (does training help the unemployed to leave unemployment sooner?). In the meantime, there is growing evidence that the long term effects of training programmes are more favourable than their short term impacts (Lechner et al., 2005). This strongly suggests that an assessment of the effectiveness of training policies has to take into account its long term effects.

##### *2. (Policy-)relevance*

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<sup>15</sup> "Analyse van de arbeidsmarktpositie na gedwongen ontslag en de rol van het beleidsinstrumentarium hierbij", recently awarded to HIVA KULeuven.

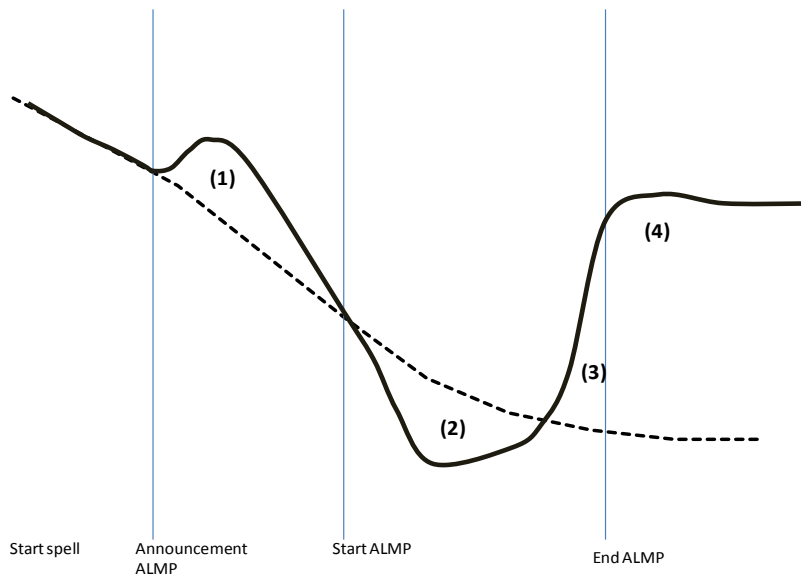
Training is one of the more expensive ALMP's. As training for the unemployed in Flanders is already important and probably will get even more weight in the future, it is therefore essential to have reliable information in order to help policy makers and training providers with their decision as to whether specific types of training should be provided or not. To this end, one needs effectiveness research that assesses both short and long term effects.

### 3. *Status questionis and added value*

Figure 5 gives a stylised representation of the possible (short term) effects of an active labour market programme (ALMP) (based on Lalive et al., 2011). The horizontal axis gives the evolution over time, beginning at the start of an unemployment spell. The vertical axis describes the propensity to leave unemployment. The dotted line describes the evolution of this propensity if there is no ALMP. The solid line describes what (can) change(s) in case of ALMP-participation. Four effects are distinguished.

(1) At given point, it is announced that the person will have to participate. If the person dislikes participating, she will increase her search efforts, resulting in an increased propensity to leave unemployment: this is called the threat effect. (2) As the person starts with the ALMP, she will reduce her search effort, since participation (especially in case of training) is time demanding. The propensity to leave will decrease. This is called the locking-in effect. (3) Some ALMP, like training, will lead to improved skills or knowledge, making the search effort more productive. This is the skill enhancement effect. (4) After ending the participation in the ALMP, there can be a signal effect, if the unemployed is now in a better position to reveal information to a potential employer about her productivity (with e.g. a training certificate).

The reason why the short term effect of training is often estimated to be modest, is primarily related to the locking-in effect: training programmes can easily last a few weeks or even months, and with an increasing training duration, the locking-in effect will quickly become dominant. In some cases, the duration of an unemployment spell with training will even become longer than what would have been the case without training, and the short term training effect will be negative.



#### **Figure 5. The four effects of ALMP (Lalive et al., 2011)**

As such, this should not be a problem, provided that this locking-in is outweighed by longer term effects of the participation such as e.g. a higher employment probability, a higher probability to remain employed or a higher probability to find a good job.

#### *4. Methodology, added value and data*

In several countries, large administrative databases have become available for research. These databases not only have a large number of observations, they often are also rich in content. Quite a few training impact evaluations have exploited these advantages by relying on matching methods, such as e.g. propensity score matching (Wunsch & Lechner, 2007; Biewen et al., 2007; Dehejia & Wahba, 1999; Fitzenberger & Völter, 2007; Lechner, 2009; Lechner & Wiehler, 2007). These matching approaches assume that the selection process, i.e. the decision whether or not to participate in training, can be entirely described by the observed variables.

Even with exceptionally rich data, however, it remains difficult to assert that no selection occurs on unobservable individual traits, such as motivation. Methods that allow for selection on unobservables are more robust and therefore preferred to methods taking only the selection on observables into account (see e.g. Kastoryano & van der Klaauw, 2011)

The timing-of-events approach (Abbring & van den Berg, 2003) does account for selection on unobservables. In this approach, the fact that the training starts after the beginning of the unemployment spell, is exploited : if training has an effect at all, this effect can manifest itself only after the start of the training. It is however important that participants cannot anticipate the exact starting point of the training (see also Crépon et al., 2010). Richardson & van den Berg (2008) apply this methodology to a Swedish training programme. They also allow for heterogeneous treatment effects with respect to time ( the effect of the training on the probability to leave unemployment is larger when the training is just finished, and declines thereafter as time goes by), and w.r.t. characteristics of the participants (age, educational attainment, etc.) (see also Gaure et al., 2010 for the importance of correctly specifying heterogeneity). When the duration of the training itself is neglected, the programme has a large positive effect on the exit to work, shortly after exiting the training. If, however, time spent in the training is taken into account, the effect of the training (on unemployment duration) disappears: this is the locking-in effect at work. Crépon et al. (2007) evaluate a French public training programme with the same method, and extend the analysis by also modelling the duration of the subsequent employment spells. They find, in line with the literature, that training does not accelerate the exit from unemployment. Interestingly, however, is their conclusion that longer training spells not only cause longer unemployment spells, but also longer employment spells, compatible with the finding of others that training may only be effective in the longer-run. Gaure et al. (2008), evaluating Norwegian ALMP's in general, come to comparable conclusions. Their results however suggest that it is important to perform a cost benefit analysis, as the positive employment effects (on employment duration, on wages) not necessarily will offset the negative locking-in effect (Gaure et al., 2008).

Measuring the joint effects on unemployment and employment of training for the unemployed in Flanders with a methodology akin to the one used in these papers, will be a first, and will have as value added that it will give more insights regarding policy choices such as e.g. whether to offer short or long training courses.

In Bollens (s.d.), we isolated a flow sample of all the individuals that became unemployed in 2007, and we followed their labour market trajectory until September 2010. This sample consists of 210658 unemployment spells (and 170428 unique persons). During these spells, some 12745 vocational trainings were registered in the VDAB-training database, followed by 6259 persons. This is a natural

starting point for investigating the effects of vocational training, as already a lot of preliminary work has been done, and the choice of 2007 allows to follow up this groups during several years, which can be important when assessing the long term effects. Using this sample (or a subsample), the timing of events method will be applied in order to unravel short term effects of training on the transition rate to employment (first stage) and long term effects on employment duration and unemployment recurrence (second stage).

## **WP5. Effectiveness of job vacancy referral**

### *1. Research question*

The VDAB, the Public Employment service in Flanders, has an unemployment register with relevant information (age, education, place of residence, job preferences, etc.) of the persons who currently are unemployed. At the same time, the VDAB maintains a database with the job vacancies that are currently available. Obviously, both databases are regularly compared in order to find whether suitable matches can be found between an unemployed and a job vacancy. These matches are subsequently used in various ways. In the *notification* procedure, an unemployed person will be informed that an adequate match has been found for him or her. The unemployed person is, however, not required to respond to the notification. In the so called *referral* procedure, more commitment is imposed. Here the matching between job characteristics and the unemployed is partly standardised and partly based on the appreciation of caseworkers. Upon referral, application to the vacancy is compulsory. Non-compliance can result in a sanction, such as a reduction or temporary withdrawal of the unemployment benefit.

In Bollens and Heylen (2009) the effectiveness of the notification procedure for new entrants in unemployment was investigated. The notification the notification was found to have no effect on the transition rate from unemployment to employment. From the literature (see Section 5.3) we can deduce three possible explanations for this finding: (i) the vacancy referrals provided by VDAB crowd out private job search effort of the unemployed; (ii) the high standardization of the notification procedure may lead to a low quality of the match between the requirements of the referred vacancy and the characteristics of the unemployed worker; (iii) the notification procedure is not compulsory, so that the positive 'threat' effect of a sanction in case of non-compliance in a mandatory scheme is lacking.

The referral procedure is clearly different in the last two mentioned respects: (i) vacancy referrals are not completely standardised and automated, since caseworkers appreciate the adequacy of the match; (ii) application to the referred vacancy is mandatory. This justifies to investigate whether, in contrast to the notification procedure, the referral procedure does positively affect the transition rate from unemployment to employment.

The mandatory nature of the referral procedure also questions whether the quality of the job matches is affected. For, by forcing workers to apply for jobs, these workers may accept jobs that pay lower wages or offer poorer employment conditions. We will also investigate into this question to the extent that the required time and data are available (see Section 5.4).

### *2. (Policy-)relevance*

Even if the referral procedure is relatively cheap (as compared to training programmes for example) it is essential to be informed about its effectiveness. For, since it is operated on a relatively large scale, in the overall costs are still likely to be substantial. Moreover, the scheme imposes other costs that are not negligible. There are the many unemployed who are obliged to devote time and effort into job applications and, by the same token, there are many employers who devote resources to job applications.

### 3. *Status questionis and added value*

In a meta-analysis of the effectiveness research in Europe (Kluve, 2010), also the 'Services and Sanctions'- type of ALMP's are considered. These are policies that are aimed at enhancing the job search efficiency. Examples are job search courses, job clubs, vocational guidance, counselling and monitoring, and sanctions in the case of non-compliance with job search requirements. The referral procedure clearly belongs to this category. As to their effectiveness, Kluve (2010) concludes that this type of ALMP's turns out to be particularly promising, as, on average, their effects on the probability to leave unemployment towards employment are positive, while at the same time this kind of policies are relatively inexpensive.

Specific analysis on the effectiveness of referrals is rare. On the basis of a randomized experiment in Sweden, Engström et al. (2009) conclude that a large fraction (one third) of job referrals do not result in job applications. If the Public Employment Service (PES) announces that it will contact the employer to verify whether referred vacancies have been applied to, the job application rate increases. However, the policy does not affect unemployment duration. Moreover, Van den Berg and Vikström (2009) argue that the verification whether referred jobs have been applied to, can downgrade the quality of the job.

Fougère et al. (2009) study whether or not in France vacancy referral provided by the PES crowds out the more costly job search of the unemployed worker. Such crowding out could explain why vacancy referrals don't automatically boost the job finding rate. Van den Berg and Van der Klaauw (2006), for instance, find that in The Netherlands the monitoring of formal job search crowds out informal job search. By contrast, Fougère et al. find that in France contacts brought about by the PES are more often transformed into a hiring proposal vacancy than private search, especially for the low educated and low skilled workers. Hence, in France vacancy referrals enhance the exit rate from unemployment, especially for disadvantaged workers, even if application to these jobs was neither monitored nor, consequently, sanctioned.

Given that studies on this topic are scarce, additional research evidence on the topic is welcome. Moreover, the operational features of the referral procedures in other countries differ from those in Flanders. For instance, in France the application to job referrals is not mandatory. Since these operational features can affect the effectiveness of the scheme, it is important to gather more evidence on different schemes, so that the extent to which these features matter, can be studied in a more systematic way.

### 4. *Methodology and data*

Also here it is important to use an evaluation strategy that allows for both selection on observables and on unobservables. Given the fact that a (first) referral can be obtained at any unemployment duration, the referral scheme lends itself ideally to the application of the timing of events approach which was also proposed as method in workpackages 2 and 4.

Two processes that both start at the beginning of the unemployment spell, can be distinguished. The first process relates to transitions from unemployment to employment, and has a latent continuous duration  $T_e$ . The second process relates to the referral process, and gives rise to a latent continuous duration  $T_r$ . In the "timing of events"-approach (Abbring & van den Berg, 2003), these two processes are modelled simultaneously. It is assumed that an event in the referral-dimension (i.e. obtaining a referral at a given point), will change, from that point onwards, the process describing the transition from unemployment to employment. In other words, the person is unemployed both before and after obtaining a referral, but the hazard rate out of unemployment is allowed to be different before and after obtaining a referral. It is this difference that will be used to identify the effect of the referral approach. Selection on unobservables is solved by making the not overly unrealistic assumption that



unobserved heterogeneity is constant over the entire unemployment spell, whereas a referral can only affect the transition to employment after have been obtained.

For methodological reasons it is crucial that the unemployed does not anticipate the moment of referral. In some cases the referral is announced, since the unemployed worker is invited to a meeting with the caseworker at which a vacancy is proposed. In these cases we will choose the invitation to the meeting rather than the referral itself as the starting point of the treatment. This also allows to investigate the “threat effect” of the vacancy referral: the worker may not show up at the planned meeting either because the threat of the sanction is not sufficient to induce participation or because it induces the worker to accept more quickly a job that she has found by herself.

We will use data from the unemployment register as collected by the VDAB. Anyone who enters unemployment is recorded in the month of entrance. The dataset has information on the labour market position of the individual at the end of all subsequent months (either unemployed or employed). Here we will select a flow sample of all the new spells in a given period. In another database, the VDAB collects information with respect to the referrals. For each referral, we know the exact date the individual was referred to a vacancy or invited to a meeting in which a referral is proposed. These two datasets can be easily matched.

If we want to study the effect of referrals on the quality of job matches, we need to match the register data of VDAB with Social Security records. This is in principle possible by submitting an official request to the Crossroads Bank of Social Security (see the discussion in work package 2 for more details). We will investigate the financial and practical feasibility of such a matching.

## **WP6. Scientific service provision**

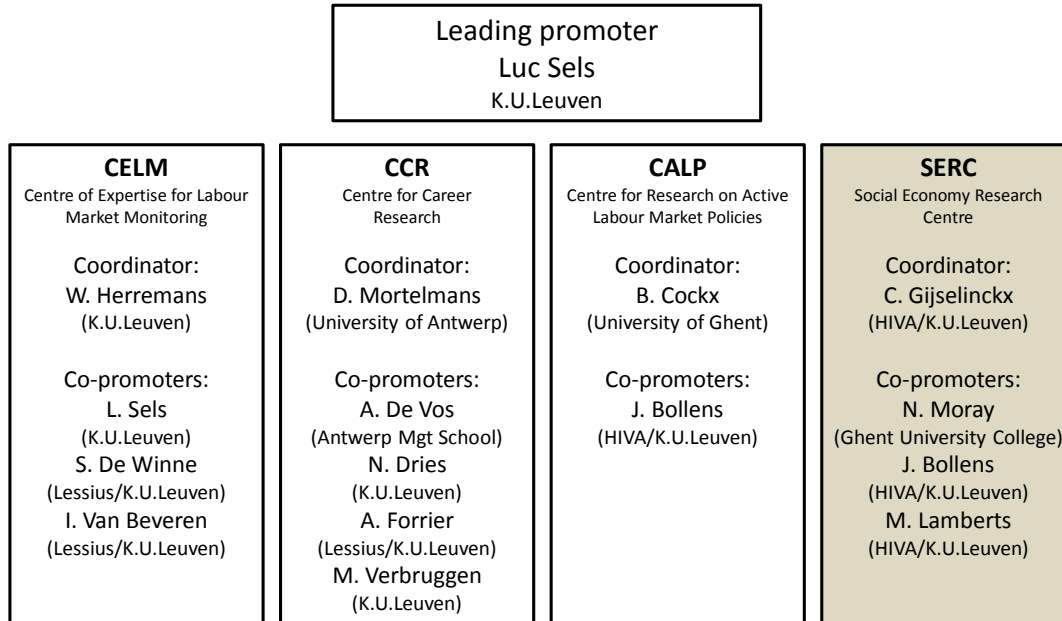
### *1. Ad hoc assignments*

Policy makers sometimes urgently need a scientifically sound input to solve one of the current policy issues. For issues that are related to the effectiveness of a (potentially) employment rate enhancing policy, the CALP can offer support. In that case, one can recur to an ad hoc assignment. On each occasion, it will be necessary to consider together the impact of the assignment on current activities. This may lead to the postponement of proposed projects in the relevant annual schedule.

### *2. Participation in conferences, seminars and other dissemination activities*

Apart from the dissemination of the research results through the regular scientific channels (research reports, articles, websites, scientific conferences), the CALP will participate in dissemination activities aimed to a larger audience (policy makers, social partners, the public at large) by contributing and participating in seminars, study days, work meetings etc.

## D. SERC – Social Economy Research Centre



### Introduction and core tasks

#### *The Social Economy*

The social economy, which is the research object of the SERC, is defined by the Flemish government in reference to the definition originally developed by the former association of social enterprises, now the Platform of the Social Economy (VOSEC). In the most recent bill on 'the support of social entrepreneurship and the stimulation of corporate social responsibility' (*Ontwerpdecreet 'betreffende ondersteuning van het ondernemerschap op het vlak van de sociale economie en de stimulering van het maatschappelijk verantwoord ondernemen'*) the social economy is defined as "the variety of Enterprises and initiatives that:

1. put forward the realization of specific societal values and principles in their objectives. More specifically, these specific societal values and principles are:
  - a. creation and preservation of employment, strengthening competences that are conducive to enduring careers and jobs (where possible transition to enduring jobs within the social economy and to the regular economic circuit). Emphasis is put on the labour market position of persons with less opportunities, emancipation, integration, competences and enduring careers;
  - b. sustainable development, environment friendly production and production processes and integrated care for the environment;
  - c. giving labour priority over capital when distributing profits, whereby profits are not an aim in itself, but a means to realize societal objectives;

- d. democratic decision making, whereby stakeholders are stimulated and given the opportunity to have a say in the policy of the enterprise;
  - e. full transparency, among other with respect to the general policy, the finances and the internal and external relations of the enterprise;
  - f. quality of the relations: with respect to external relations this means that win-win partnerships are aimed for, whereby costs and benefits are distributed according to principles of equality and transparency. With respect to internal relations personal development, non-discrimination and good labour conditions are emphasized;
  - g. societal embeddedness through dialogue with the local community and non-governmental organisations in the field, through networking and cooperation.
2. deliver goods and services in the market, answering to existing and future clients and needs, in a continuous and cost efficient way.

#### *The Flemish policy with respect to the social economy*

The Policy Letter 2010-2011 by Flemish Minister for the Social Economy, Freya Van den Bossche, summarizes the policy accents of the Flemish government with respect to this social economy. Six strategic goals are presented:

1. more work and more tailormade work,
2. less societal needs through the delivery of more societal services combined with social insertion of target group workers,
3. creation of more sustainable jobs and more flow of target group workers to sustainable jobs (in the regular economy),
4. facilitation of the road to a more social economy,
5. putting quality first with respect to processes and products, as well as regulations,
6. realize a maximum of multiple societal values.

The Coalition Agreement of the Flemish government 2009-2014 proposes the reorganisation of the social economy in two pillars: tailormade work in the social economy on the one hand and local service economy on the other hand. It also proposes a reform of the specific support structure for the social economy, established within the framework of the Resolution on Multiple Values (Meerwaardenbesluit). The reform should be driven by the needs of social entrepreneurs and the aim to support innovation in the social economy. Complementarity and societal values are central principles. The implementation of these policy options is ongoing. Several reforms have been realised, or are to be finalised shortly: a new regulation with respect to tailormade work (encompassing sheltered and social workshops (beschutte en sociale werkplaatsen), as well as insertion companies (invoegbedrijven)), a new regulation with respect to the local service economy, a new support structure for the social economy. Projects with respect to innovation in the social economy and pilot projects on cooperative entrepreneurship have been launched in order to stimulate innovation in the social economy and the use and development of innovative social and participative economic models as an answer to societal challenges respectively.

#### *The Social Economy Research Unit of the Policy Research Centre WSE*

For a number of years now, the Policy Research Centre WSE, has built up the requisite expertise in the use of databases with relevance to social economy policy, and the development of monitoring tools. With the Social Economy Research Centre of the Policy Research Centre WSE (SERC), we will build further on this experience during the period 2012-2016, in order to support, on an on-going basis, the Flemish social economy policy, strengthen the social economy and its ability to answer societal needs in

ways that are in line with the social economy values and principles, support the creation of job opportunities and support for target group workers, and develop innovative organisational, financial and governance models in order to realise multiple values.

In comparison with the previous term of the Policy Research Centre WSE the SERC will elaborate the monitor of the social economy, developed earlier, in order to take into account the reforms in the policy framework and in order to measure multiple types of values realised (or profits). Both a reorganisation and elaboration of the population of enterprises encompassed by the monitor as well as the development of other indicators than the present economic indicators and indicators with respect to work integration are needed. At the macro level, the SERC aims to conceptualise, make operational and measure these indicators with respect to the social enterprises encompassed by the monitor of the social economy. These indicators should pinpoint to the values created by the social economy, however also with respect to enterprises in the regular economy these indicators should be convenient to measure the multiple values created by them. Next to a general picture of the social economy, we also aim to realize an analysis of the multiple values (profits) created by different subpopulations of enterprises (tailormade work enterprises, local service economy, support structure of the social economy, cooperative enterprises,...) as well as at the level of different activity sectors.

At the level of the enterprises (meso-level) and the level of the individual (micro-level), the theoretical concept of 'empowerment' (Jacobs et al., 2005; Van Regenmortel, 2008 & 2010; Rappaport, 1984; Zimmerman, 2000) will offer the guiding framework for the conceptualisation and analysis of the processes and outcomes of 'community empowerment' realised through social entrepreneurship' and the search for management models and instruments that support social enterprises and their stakeholders to develop economic answers to societal problems, driven by the principles and values of the social economy. Within this theoretical framework, social enterprises are seen as instruments of stakeholders who want to develop answers to their needs and expectations, that is to create social values. The concept of empowerment focuses on the strengths or powers of people and organisations to gain mastery over their lives (Rappaport, 1984) – which is exactly what social enterprises aim to do. Participation, active involvement, control and critical awareness are key to this mastery (Zimmerman, 2000). An analytical distinction is made between personal empowerment, organisational empowerment and community empowerment (Peterson & Zimmerman, 2004). This framework will underpin an empirical analysis of how social enterprises empower people and communities to find business economic answers to societal challenges and develop services in the fields of care, healthcare, child care, home care, housing, sustainable energy, mobility,... and action research in which management scales/instruments will be elaborated (co-created by researchers and practitioners) that will measure and support the empowering capacity of social enterprises and their stakeholders, formulating answers to societal challenges. It will also underpin the formulation of policy recommendations to facilitate empowering social entrepreneurship.

Last but not least, SERC will make an analysis of job creation opportunities for target group workers in the regular labour market. We will focus on what employers (and sectors) in the regular labour market can do and are doing to improve the integration of target group workers. Special attention will be given to the quality of work. Integration of target group workers in decent and sustainable jobs will be the goal.

Therefore, during the period of activity of the Policy Research Centre, five core tasks of the WSE-SERC can be distinguished, operationalized by means of five complementary work packages.

- WP1. Elaboration of the monitor of the social economy
  - WP 1a Elaboration of the population of social enterprises (HIVA): methodology and analysis

WP 1b Toward a broader measurement of multiple values realised by the social economy: methodology, survey, analysis (HoGent)

- WP2. Community empowerment through social entrepreneurship
- WP3. Analyses of job creation opportunities for target group workers (HIVA)

In what follows, we will describe each of these work packages.

### **WP1. Elaboration of the monitor of the social economy**

A first monitor of the social economy was developed by the Policy Research Centre WSE in the period 2007-2011. The current Policy Research Centre WSE has produced extensive and detailed documentation on the conceptualisation and development of the monitor (methodological reports) (Deraedt & Van Opstal, 2009a; Gijselinckx & Van den Broek, 2008; Gijselinckx, 2010); as well as on the results (Deraedt & Van Opstal, 2009b; Deraedt, Van Opstal & Gijselinckx, 2009; Gijselinckx, Van Opstal, Deraedt & Van den Broek, *forthcoming*; Van Opstal & Deraedt, 2010). This helps ensure the transparency of that process, and provides a manual for the implementation of new updates and for their possible transfer to the Department WSE. Updates of the monitor are made by the Department WSE in their Policy Barometers (Beleidsbarometers) (see also Jacobs & Samoy, 2010) and the figures are accessible via the interactive monitor of the social economy, available on [www.werk.be](http://www.werk.be).

The current monitor paints a picture of work integration enterprises (social and sheltered workshops, insertion companies, local service enterprises, work experience projects, labour care projects) in Flanders as well as the target group workers within it (persons aged of 50, migrants, low educated and/or 'persons with a work handicap').

We assume the continuation of the current monitor by the Department WSE with the SERC prioritising its focus on (1) the elaboration of the population of enterprises encompassed by the monitor on the social economy, (2) the development of a survey-instrument for the collection of missing data on the multiple societal values realised by social enterprises encompassed by the enlarged monitor. From this viewpoint, the Department WSE organises the follow-on measurements. In collaboration with the Department WSE/VSA\_WSE we will set up a survey among the (enlarged) population of social enterprises in order to measure missing indicators. For budgetary and practical reasons we propose to make use of electronic survey-software). The idea is that, as soon as the new regulations are in place (probably 2014), the Department WSE/VSA-WSE will integrate the questionnaire in its own data collection on enterprises that apply for government funding or present themselves as service providers in response to public procurement initiatives, and will be able to update the data on the additional indicators largely through this new database.

#### **WP1a Elaboration of the population of social enterprises**

A first elaboration of the monitor of the social economy in Flanders has to do with the objective to broaden the population of social enterprises covered by the monitor, not restricting the monitor to work integration enterprises, and to take into account the policy reforms in the field of the social economy (two pillars, supportive structure). In a preparatory methodological report for the development of a monitoring instrument on the social economy in Flanders (Gijselinckx & Van den Broeck, 2008) a broad definition of the social economy was proposed, not restricting it to work integration enterprises. In line with former research by HIVA (Develtere, 2006; Lauwereys & Nicaise, 1999; Marée et al., 2007; Van den Broeck, Vanhoren & Nicaise, 2006) and with the international literature (Borzaga & Defourny, 2000; Defourny, et al., 2001; Defourny et al., 2009; Defourny et al. 1999; Levesque, 2001; Marée & Mertens, 2002; Mertens, 2002; Nyssens et al., 2005) the social economy was defined with reference to the social character of the objectives and/or of the processes and organisations through which these objectives

are realised. The social economy is the economic field in which social values and social objectives prevail. Three subpopulations of 'social enterprises' were distinguished: (1) work integration enterprises (their primary aim is the creation of tailor-made jobs for target group workers), (2) support bodies for the social economy (such as solidarity financiers, social economy consultants,...), (3) enterprises that are established to meet other social objectives than work integration (such as fair trade, sustainable production and consumption, participative organisation, ...). Pragmatically, the monitor was restricted to the first category.

An elaboration of the population of the monitor is however possible, and will be proposed now, in reference to the scenario's designed for a more elaborated monitor in the preparatory methodological report for the development of a monitor of the social economy in Flanders. Indeed, in this report we proposed empirical criteria for the selection of enterprises as 'social enterprises' and their inclusion in the monitor. First, a recognition as social enterprise by the government, operationalised as (1) recognition and subvention by the Flemish subvention agency for the social economy (VSA-WSE) as a sheltered or a social workshop, as an insertion enterprise, as a local service enterprise, as a work experience project, or as a labour care initiative, and (2) as an accreditation (for cooperatives) by the National Council for Cooperation. Second, self-definition as a social enterprise, operationalised through the statute of 'social purpose company' on the one hand, and as membership of a federation of enterprises that is member of the Flemish Platform of the Social Economy, as well as self-registration as a social enterprise at the website of the Flemish Platform of the Social Economy (Gijsselinckx & Van den Broeck, 2008). A view on parts of the population of social enterprises not currently present in the monitor (e.g. social purpose companies, cooperative enterprises,...) has been provided in other research by the research team of Caroline Gijsselinckx (see e.g. Gijsselinckx, Deneffe & Coates, 2011; Gijsselinckx & Deneffe, 2010; Gijsselinckx & Van Opstal, 2010; Van Opstal, Gijsselinckx & Develtere, 2008).

We perceive the following steps to realize the broadening of the population of social enterprises:

- Creation of the methodology for the enlargement of the population of social enterprises
- Application for data from the relevant national databases
- Coupling of data from different national databases
- Analysis & reporting

WP1a will be done by HIVA, under the guidance of Caroline Gijsselinckx.

Period: 2012-2015.

### ***WP1b Assessment of multiple values realised by the social economy: methodology, survey, analysis***

A second elaboration has to do with broadening the scope of the indicators measured by the monitor, aiming to measure multiple types of values realised (or 'profits'). In order to do this, we will focus on the development of other indicators than the present economic performance indicators and indicators with respect to work integration of target group workers. The elements that will form the input for the development of these indicators will directly come from a critical assessment of the instrument for the reporting of the creation of multiple values by enterprises developed in the VIONA-study on the feasibility of realizing and showing sustainable entrepreneurship (an analysis of the applicability and usefulness of ISO26000 and GRI instruments, by UNU-CRIS / RCE-SNS & Howest) on the sustainability criteria used in sustainable public procurement on the other hand.

The UCollege Ghent partner has developed exploratory subdimensions for 'blended value creation', based on the components of the Dow Jones Sustainability Index and the literature (e.g. Carmeli and Tishler, 2004; Turker, 2009). Since there is no readily available instrument for socio-economic performance at the organisational level, they adapted existing scales and tested these in a sample of

about 100 social purpose companies in Flanders: insertion companies (invoegbedrijven), social purpose companies (VSOs) and people-planet oriented cooperatives. In parallel with doctoral research under supervision of Nathalie Moray and in consultation with the steering group and field experts, these dimensions and measures will be adjusted to the context of tailor made work and local service economy organisations. At this stage we focus on five dimensions: economic, human, consumer, community and environmental value creation / performance. Although current exploratory research mainly included perceptual measures, in line with the strategy and entrepreneurship literatures, the activities within this work package will further develop and elaborate quantitative indicators relevant for social enterprises.

We propose the following steps to be undertaken for the elaboration of the indicators measuring multiple values are:

- Creation of instrument for the measurement of multiple values
- Survey measuring the creation of multiple values by social enterprises (conducting the survey, follow-up calls). The population equals the broadened population of the monitor as proposed above.
- 3 case studies (tailormade work enterprise, social purpose company, people-planet oriented cooperative)
- Analysis and reporting

WP1b will be done by the UCollege Ghent. Nathalie Moray will act as a co-promoter.

Period: 2013-2014

*Deliverables for the total WP1 are:*

- a report and Over.Werk-article on the methodology of the elaboration of the monitor (broadening the population) and the results.
- a report and Over.Werk-article on the profile of the broader population of social enterprises and their employees
- a report and Over.Werk-article on the development and results of the survey measuring multiple values created by social enterprises

## **WP2. Community empowerment through social entrepreneurship**

At the level of the enterprises, the theoretical concept of 'empowerment' (Jacobs et al., 2005; Van Regenmortel, 2008 & 2010; Rappaport, 1984; Zimmerman, 2000) provides an interesting framework for the analysis of the social impact realized by social enterprises on communities and the search for management models and instruments that support social enterprises and their stakeholders in their efforts to create multiple societal values (that is to develop economic answers to societal problems, driven by the principles and values of the social economy). It also provides a guiding framework to look for new and assess existing policy measures that empower social enterprises in their attempts to create multiple values.

Initially, empowerment was conceptualised and analysed at the individual level. Recent developments in the empowerment literature however argue for an inclusion of organisational and community dimensions in the framework. A distinction is made between empowerment at different levels: at the level of the individual one speaks of 'personal empowerment', at the level of the enterprise or organisation one speaks of 'organisational empowerment', and at the level of the community (or society) one speaks of 'community empowerment' (Zimmerman, 2000). Organisations are pivotal: they (have the potential to) contribute to the empowerment of their individual stakeholders and the

communities of their stakeholders, but they are, themselves also empowered by institutions and organisations in their environment (among others other enterprises, civil society organisations and public authorities). The concept of empowerment focuses on the strengths or powers of people and organisations to gain mastery over their lives, as well as on the counteracting mechanisms and how to overcome them (Rappaport, 1984). Participation, active involvement, control and critical awareness are key to this mastery (Zimmerman, 2000). An analysis of the processes and outcomes of empowerment within and through social enterprises will focus on intra-, inter-, and extra-organisational components (Peterson & Zimmerman, 2004). This is very much in line with a critical realist social science, focussing on the agency (the capacity and power of individuals to make a change in oneself and in one's environment) of individual and collective agents. A capacity and power that emerges from the combination of their personal emergent properties and their position in and view upon the cultural and structural emergent properties they find themselves in. It focuses on how agents can enlarge their agency by transforming their own properties and the structural and/or cultural properties they find themselves in. It also focuses on the counteracting mechanisms and how they can be overcome (Gijssels, 2006a, b and c).

Within this theoretical framework, social enterprises are seen as instruments of stakeholders who want to develop answers to their needs and expectations, that is to create social values. This can be in the sphere of employment (creation of job opportunities for target group workers, development of competences, jobsatisfaction, social inclusion, ...) which can be named outcomes of 'empowering work' through empowering work processes (e.g. tailor-made jobs, participative work organisation, ...) which can be defined as processes of 'empowering work'. But it can also be in the sphere of the delivery of qualitative social services and the satisfaction of their consumers, or the environment friendly production of goods, or fair trade,...). Here the concept of 'community empowerment' can be introduced in order to conceptualise and analyse the processes and outcomes of the empowerment of communities realised by and through social enterprises. Within the framework of the SERC, we will focus upon this 'community empowerment'.

This framework will underpin action research in which management scales/instruments will be elaborated (co-created by researchers and practitioners) that will measure and support the empowering capacity of social enterprises and their stakeholders, formulating answers to societal challenges. It will also underpin the formulation of policy recommendations to facilitate empowering social entrepreneurship.

We propose to develop an integrated empowerment theory for social entrepreneurship that will underpin the next research steps. It will be inspired by and worked out in line with the research done by the HIVA-research team led by Prof. dr. Tine Van Regenmortel (to which Caroline Gijssels, coordinator of the SERC, and her collaborators belong). Tine Van Regenmortel is an internationally renowned expert in empowerment-research. Likewise, the methodology for the development of instruments and scales for the measurement of empowerment processes and outcomes will be based upon the expertise built up by Van Regenmortel's research team with respect to the translation of research findings into concrete methods and instruments. Tine Van Regenmortel and her team propose a work package on 'empowerment and participation' in the Research Policy Centre on Poverty and Social Exclusion. The proposed work on empowerment and social entrepreneurship will be synchronised with the work on empowerment and participation in this Research Policy Centre. The development of scales/instruments to measure 'empowering work' and 'community empowerment' will be undertaken along the lines of the 'empowering Applied Academic Centre' developed by the Policy Research Centre on Poverty and Social Exclusion. We aim to arrive at the construction of instruments/scales for empowerment that are realistic and agreed upon by the field. We also aim at the formulation of realistic



policy recommendations. Therefore joint production of knowledge on empowerment outcomes, processes and conditions is deemed necessary. This way, we want to offer innovative scientific support to actors in the social economy, the society at large, and governments responsible for the creation of a facilitating framework for the development of a more social economy.

In practice, this means that a community of knowledge will be created with researchers of Policy Research Centre WSE and practitioners in the social economy, in which co-creation of knowledge and co-development of scales/instruments will take place (for an insight in processes, challenges, pitfalls and possibilities of collaboration between researchers and practitioners and of valorization of research in the human and social sciences, see Gijssels & Steenssens, 2011). Therefore, a project group and user platform will be established, with clear agreements on the timing, scope and methodology. In the last phase of the research period, extensive dissemination is foreseen (seminars with practitioners and policy makers, concrete guidelines for the implementation of empowerment measurement). For a more detailed description of the empowerment framework and the approach of the 'empowering Applied Academic Centre' we refer to the description of work package 10 by Tine Van Regenmortel of the proposal for the Policy Research Centre on Poverty and Social Exclusion.

The research activities within the work package on 'empowerment and social entrepreneurship' will be organised in four parts (timing between brackets):

1. Community empowerment through social entrepreneurship: conceptual framework (2013 - 2014)
2. Empirical research of processes, practices and outcomes of community empowerment through social enterprises, co-creation of scales/instruments for community empowerment (2014 - 2015)
3. Empowering policy measures for the social economy (2015)
4. Valorization & dissemination (2015)

In the first phase, an integrated empowerment theory for social entrepreneurship will be developed, resulting in a WSE-paper and an international article on community empowerment through social entrepreneurship.

In the next two years, an empirical analysis will be made of processes, practices and outcomes of community empowerment through social enterprises, and instruments/scales for the measurement of empowerment processes and outcomes on different levels (individual, organisational, community) will be developed (co-creation between researchers and practitioners). The research activities will be based upon 3 intensive case studies (3 social enterprises), selected from different fields (e.g. housing, poverty reduction, sustainable energy). This will lead to a WSE-report and an international journal article.

In the last year, empowering policy measures will form the object of research, leading to a policy brief with implications for policies that aim to empower social enterprises, communities and individuals in their efforts to answer to societal challenges. We also foresee specific activities and outputs to valorize the knowledge co-created by researchers and persons involved in the cases studied.

This work package will be done by HIVA. Caroline Gijssels will act as co-promotor.

### **WP3. Analysis of job creation opportunities for target group workers in the social economy and in the regular labour market**

In this work package we will focus on what employers (and sectors) in the regular labour market can and are doing to improve the integration of target group workers. Special attention will be given to the quality of work (integration of target group workers in decent and sustainable jobs).

First of all, we will select two niches (sectors and/or occupations) with predicted labor market shortages and (theoretical) opportunities for the target group workers (based on desk research). Next we will explore the strategies to guarantee that theoretical opportunities can become real chances for the target group workers. A possible selection of sectors can for instance be the health care and the construction sector.

Previous research has provided us with evidence that the presence of unfulfilled vacancies can be a trigger for organisations and sectors to look for solutions on organisational and sector level (Lamberts e.a., 2002; De Cuyper & Lamberts, 2008). Efforts and strategies to promote the recruitment and sustainable employment of the selected target group workers can be one of the solutions on organisational and sector level.

In each niche we aim to perform five case studies. We will look for good practices, for organisations or sector initiatives having experience with the integration of the target group workers. Special attention will hereby be given to the way target group workers are sustainably integrated in the organisations. We will be looking at the motivation of the employers, the nature of the actions undertaken (or under consideration) and the success (or failure) of these actions. Are they lowering their hiring-thresholds for required skills, combined or not with providing training themselves? Are they willing to focus on attracting and keeping non-standard employees and in particular members of the defined target group? Are they providing individual coaching? Are they investing in sustainable and decent work? Are they willing to change working and employment conditions or quality of work to provide suitable and better jobs? Etc. Interviews at different levels are planned (employers' and employees' representatives, target group workers,...)

For each niche, we will organise a 'niche' level workshop. Other organisations confronted with labour market shortages and (structural) unfulfilled vacancies will be invited. Goal of these workshops is to give information about the target group workers (provided by the social economy sector) and to confront the sector with the experiences from the selected cases. In these workshops, we will discuss the desirability and feasibility of the proposed strategies.

The conclusions will be analysed and reported.

Deliverables: workshops, WSE Report and article in Over.Werk

Timing: 2013

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### 3. Managementluik

#### 3.1 Opdracht van het Steunpunt WSE

Het Steunpunt WSE bestaat uit vier centra:

- Het **Centre of Expertise for Labour Market Monitoring WSE-CELM**, dat de taken overneemt van de vorige Unit Data-Ontwikkeling. De belangrijkste taken zijn: de ontsluiting van arbeidsmarktinformatie voor beleidsdoelen, de ontwikkeling van de Arbeidsrekening (geïntegreerd arbeidsmarktstatistiekmodel) en strategische boordtabellen over de Vlaamse arbeidsmarkt, de simulatie van activiteits- en werkzaamheidsgraden, de methodologische ondersteuning van VLAMT (Vlaams Arbeidsmarktonderzoek voor de Toekomst), de opvolging van de vacaturemarkt en de benchmarking van de Vlaamse arbeidsmarktprestaties in Europees perspectief. De CELM is de draaischijf voor arbeidsmarktinformatie in Vlaanderen, ontwikkelt daartoe een interactieve website en continueert het tijdschrift Over.Werk. De CELM werkt actief samen met het Departement WSE.
- Het **Centre for Career Research WSE-CCR**, dat zich toelegt op de studie van transitie op de arbeidsmarkt, met bijzondere aandacht voor de transitie van werk naar werk, de analyse van zoekgedrag bij transitie en de succesvoorwaarden van heroriëntering in arbeidsloopbanen. In CCR krijgt ook het onderzoek naar de (determinanten van vervroegde) uittrede uit en herintrede in de arbeidsloopbaan bij 50-plussers bijzondere aandacht. Ook de implicaties voor het beleidsinstrumentarium van bijvoorbeeld de overgang van job- naar loopbaanzekerheid en de verlenging van de actieve loopbaan krijgen volop aandacht in CCR.
- Het **Centre for Research on Active Labour Market Policies WSE-CALP** legt zich toe op het onderzoek naar de efficiëntie en effectiviteit van activeringsinstrumenten (bv. sluitend maatpak, uitbreiding systematische aanpak 50-plus, loonkostensubsidies, sociale inschakelingsinstrumenten, etc.). Hierbij gaat bijzondere aandacht naar de inschakeling van kansengroepen en de transitie van werkloosheid naar werk, maar er is ook ruimte voor onderzoek naar de werking van loopbaaninstrumenten ter ondersteuning van transitie van werk naar werk.
- Het **Social Economy Research Centre WSE-SERC** specialiseert zich in de sociale en meerwaardeneconomie en het sociaal ondernemerschap. SERC zal instaan voor de uitbreiding van de monitor van de sociale economie (uitbreiding populatie en indicatoren). Gedreven door het 'empowerment'-paradigma (in aansluiting op en in synergie met het Vlaams Armoedesteunpunt) worden instrumenten en schalen ontwikkeld voor de meting van empowerment en worden beleidsaanbevelingen geformuleerd voor een faciliterend beleid. Tevens worden de tewerkstellingsmogelijkheden voor kansengroepen in de toekomst onderzocht, alsook de feitelijke transitie van doelgroepwerknemers naar duurzame jobs (middels een evaluatie van de nieuwe reglementering lokale diensteneconomie - LDE).

#### 3.2 Algemeen management

Het Steunpunt WSE is een consortium van K.U.Leuven (Faculteit Economie en Bedrijfswetenschappen, HIVA), Lessius Antwerpen (Departement Handelswetenschappen), Universiteit Gent (Sherppa),

Hogeschool Gent (Vakgroep Management en Organisatie), Universiteit Antwerpen (Faculteit Sociale en Politieke Wetenschappen) en Antwerp Management School. De deelnemende instellingen bezitten samen de nodige expertise en infrastructuur om het Steunpunt WSE inhoudelijk en methodologisch gestalte te geven. Bovendien bouwt het consortium verder op de expertise van het vorige Steunpunt WSE (dat op zijn beurt gegroeid is uit het Steunpunt Werkgelegenheid, Arbeid, Vorming (WAV) dat in de periode 1991-2006 de arbeidsmarktmonitoring in Vlaanderen op de kaart heeft gezet). De continuering van het consortium van het vorige Steunpunt WSE is van belang met het oog op continuering van lopende contracten met statistiekleveranciers en de contacten met de statistiekinstellingen. Het Steunpunt WSE is bv. ook verantwoordelijke voor diverse AGORA-projecten die onontbeerlijk zijn voor de ontsluiting van de data van de Kruispuntbank Sociale Zekerheid.

Het **organisatiemodel** van het vorige Steunpunt WSE (2007-2011) wordt grotendeels behouden. Dit organisatiemodel heeft in 2010-11 een kwaliteitsaudit ondergaan van het Europees Sociaal Fonds. Intussen is op die basis het ESF-kwaliteitslabel toegekend (geldig tot sept. 2013). Tevens is de Kwaliteitsevaluatie erkend door EFQM als onderdeel van de procedure tot het behalen van het C2E-label (Commitment To Excellence) en het R4E-label (Recognised for Excellence). De kwaliteitsaudit kent aan tal van kenmerken een 'maturiteitsfase' toe (fase 1 tot 5). Fase 2 wordt vereist en gezien als een degelijk maturiteitsniveau; fasen 3, 4 en 5 als hogere stappen van ontwikkeling. Het steunpunt behaalde voor elke indicator de fase 2-kwalificatie en kreeg geen enkele remediëringsactie opgelegd. Het Steunpunt heeft o.a. een fase 5-beoordeling gekregen voor: strategie, operationeel plan, strategische partnerschappen; een fase 4-beoordeling voor: missie, visie, betrokkenheid van de leidinggevende, financieel beheer, prestatie-indicatoren, evaluaties van sleutelresultaten; een fase 3-beoordeling voor: maatschappelijk verantwoord ondernemen, beheersing van kernprocessen, beheer van infrastructuur en middelen, bevorderen van het functioneren van medewerkers, personeelsbeleid.

We overlopen de belangrijkste **organisatieprincipes**:

1. **Integratie tussen de vier centres.** De vier centres (CELM, CCR, CALP, SERC) worden aangestuurd door een in fundamenteel en/of beleidsvoorbereidend onderzoek ervaren coördinator en ondersteund door co-promotoren. Gezien diverse leden een rol opnemen in meerdere centres, wordt inhoudelijke afstemming tussen de vier centra bevorderd. CELM is het 'hart' van het Steunpunt WSE en draagt door zijn ondersteunende functie van de drie andere centra bij tot maximale integratie en interne consistentie.
2. **Centrale coördinatie.** Het steunpunt staat onder leiding van een hoofdpromotor en een coördinator. De hoofdpromotor, Prof. Dr. Luc Sels, draagt de eindverantwoordelijkheid en is het aanspreekpunt voor opdrachtgever, consortiumleden, universitaire administraties en onderzoekscoördinatie. De hoofdpromotor neemt ook de vertegenwoordiging in de Stuurgroep Strategisch Arbeidsmarktonderzoek op, en is aanspreekpunt voor andere bij het arbeidsmarktbeleid betrokken actoren (zoals SERV, sociale partners, VDAB). Hij zorgt voor de algemene coördinatie en de afstemming met andere steunpunten. De coördinator van de CELM, Wim Herremans, stuurt samen met de hoofdpromotor het Steunpunt aan en staat ook in voor de afstemming met de statistiekleveranciers en de operationele samenwerking met het Departement WSE. Hij draagt de

verantwoordelijkheid voor de informatie- en communicatiefunctie (o.a. website en Over.Werk). Hoofdpromotor en coördinator staan ook in voor de rapportering aan Stuurgroep en EWI (o.a. jaarverslag en jaarplan).

3. **Gedeelde verantwoordelijkheid.** Hoofdpromotor en coördinator maken samen met de 3 overige coördinatoren en een bijkomende co-promotor per Centre deel uit van het Dagelijks Bestuur. Dit Bestuur heeft volgende opdrachten: (1) coördinatie tussen de centres, (2) inhoudelijke programmatie, (3) bewaking van financiën en middelenallocatie, (4) fijnstelling van jaarbegrotingen, (5) opstelling en validering van rapportering aan de opdrachtgever, (6) planning van collectieve publicaties, (7) kwaliteitsbewaking binnen het Steunpunt. Dit dagelijks bestuur opereert en beslist als een college. De leden zijn niet enkel vertegenwoordigers van hun Centre, maar worden geacht beslissingen te nemen in het belang van het Steunpunt.
4. **Maximale kennisdeling en –integratie.** Vanuit het Dagelijks Bestuur worden de centres op uniforme wijze aangestuurd. Het Dagelijks Bestuur hanteert daartoe één centraal planningsschema dat de kortetermijnopdrachten en deadlines per entiteit specificeert. Op die manier wordt maximale transparantie binnen het Steunpunt WSE gecreëerd. Bovendien wordt de kennisintegratie versterkt door de installatie van één sharepoint (beheerd vanuit de Faculteit Economie en Bedrijfswetenschappen K.U.Leuven) die door alle partners gebruikt wordt voor informatie-uitwisseling, documenten- en agendabeheer, literatuuroverzichten, tussentijdse resultaten, etc. De leden van de diverse centres ontmoeten mekaar in eerste instantie via de inhoudelijke werkgroepen die per centre worden opgericht (cf. infra) maar waarin ook onderzoekers uit de andere centres participeren. Via CELM wordt eveneens voorzien in de uitwisseling van kennis in verband met het verzamelen en gebruiken van arbeidsmarktstatistieken. Binnen de grenzen van de privacywetgeving en protocollen met de statistiekleveranciers worden vanuit CELM ook databanken beschikbaar gesteld voor onderzoekers uit de andere centres.
5. **Continue afstemming met de opdrachtgevers.** De afstemming met de opdrachtgever verloopt via de Stuurgroep Strategisch Arbeidsmarktonderzoek. Deze stuurgroep komt vier keer per jaar samen. Door zijn lange historiek (o.a. in het kader van VIONA-programma) en de aanwezigheid van de kernactoren (Kabinet, Departement WSE, sociale partners) is dit een krachtig orgaan voor de inhoudelijke opvolging. Het Steunpunt wordt in de Stuurgroep vertegenwoordigd door de hoofdpromotor en de steunpuntcoördinator. Tijdens elke van de vier meetings staat de rapportering van de werkzaamheden van één van de vier centres op de agenda. Naast deze afstemming via de Stuurgroep, wordt ook een periodiek overleg met het Departement WSE voorzien (met de secretaris-generaal en het afdelingshoofd). Tijdens dit overleg worden de taakverdeling en samenwerking tussen steunpunt en departement geconcretiseerd. Naast deze formele vormen van opvolging, is er informeel periodiek overleg met Kabinet, Departement WSE, SERV en VDAB. Een samenwerkingsplatform inzake arbeidsmarktmonitoring tussen CELM en Departement WSE garandeert een optimale doorstroming / uitwisseling van informatie en arbeidsmarktgegevens.

6. **Inhoudelijke opvolging via werkgroepen.** In de context van het VIONA-onderzoeksprogramma en in delegatie door de Stuurgroep, worden vier inhoudelijke werkgroepen opgestart (in opvolging van de werkgroepen in de periode 2007-2011): de Werkgroep Arbeidsmarktmonitoring, de Werkgroep Transitionele Loopbanen, de Werkgroep Activerend Arbeidsmarktbeleid en de Werkgroep Sociale Economie. Deze werkgroepen staan in voor de inhoudelijke opvolging van de werkpakketten en van de projecten die in het kader van het VIONA-programma worden gegund. Deze werkgroepen rapporteren aan de Stuurgroep Strategisch Arbeidsmarktonderzoek over de inhoudelijke waarde van het onderzoek en de mate waarin de uitvoering van het meerjarenprogramma aan de verwachtingen beantwoordt. In deze werkgroepen worden inhoudelijke experts opgenomen.

Gezien de nauwe samenwerking met het Departement WSE wordt voorzien in een quasi onbeperkte toegang voor de Vlaamse overheid tot de primaire databases. De centrale databases (o.a. EAK en DWH AM&SB) worden gezamenlijk door CELM en Departement WSE verzameld. Contracten i.v.m. de databases worden ondertekend door beide instellingen (hoofdpromotor Steunpunt WSE en secretaris-generaal Departement) zodat beleidsmedewerkers van het Departement WSE en onderzoekers van het Steunpunt WSE autonome toegang hebben tot de datasets in het kader van de arbeidsmarktmonitoring. Hiervoor worden ook gemeenschappelijke procedures bij de privacycommissie doorlopen en worden afspraken gemaakt voor een gemeenschappelijk databeveiligingsprotocol.

### **3.3 Personeelsbezetting en HR beleid**

Personeelsbeleid:

- Voor het centrale beheer en dagelijkse management zal één administratieve kracht ingezet worden. Deze werkt onder toezicht van de coördinator en wordt tewerkgesteld volgens de voorwaarden en het HR beleid die gelden voor administratief personeel aan de K.U.Leuven. Deze administratieve kracht wordt ingebed in de administratieve structuur van de Faculteit Economie en Bedrijfswetenschappen aan K.U.Leuven en zal gebruik kunnen maken van de ondersteuning door de facultaire diensten (bv. onderzoekskoördinatoren, financiële antenne) en volop kunnen participeren in de kansen die op facultair niveau voor loopbaanontwikkeling gecreëerd worden.
- De medewerkers van de CELM worden aangestuurd door de coördinator en rapporteren hiërarchisch aan coördinator en hoofdpromotor. Ze hebben een statuut van wetenschappelijk medewerker en worden tewerkgesteld volgens de voorwaarden en het HR beleid die gelden aan de K.U.Leuven. Ze komen onder het personeelsbeleid van de Faculteit Economie en Bedrijfswetenschappen. Dit personeelsbeleid wordt gekenmerkt door o.a.: jaarlijkse functioneringsgesprekken; mogelijkheid tot competentieontwikkeling, zowel intern (bv. cursussen academisch Engels en rapporteren, doctoraatsopleiding, research seminars) als extern; stimulering van kennisdeling via actief co-auteurschap; actieve stimulering tot deelname aan internationale conferenties.
- De medewerkers van de drie overige centres CCR, CALP en SERC worden tewerkgesteld aan de voorwaarden en het HR beleid die gelden aan de instelling waartoe hun promotor behoort. De leden van de diverse centres ontmoeten mekaar in eerste instantie via de inhoudelijke werkgroepen die per centre worden opgericht (cf. supra) maar waarin ook onderzoekers uit de andere centres participeren. De wetenschappelijk medewerkers moeten zich ten volle met het Steunpunt WSE

kunnen identificeren, maar ook met de instelling waarin ze werken. Daarom zal hun integratie in de onderzoeksgroepen van hun promotoren maximaal bevorderd worden. Er wordt in WSE bewust gemikt op een mix van medewerkers op doctoraatstrajecten en senior medewerkers die op korte termijn hun expertise kunnen ter beschikking stellen. De trend naar heterogene doctoraten, bestaande uit meerdere afzonderlijke wetenschappelijke publicaties, maakt dat de investering in intensieve kennisopbouw in een doctoraatstraject niet ten koste gaat van flexibiliteit.

Personeelsplanning:

- De coördinator van CELM wordt aangesteld met een contract van onbepaalde duur in het zogenaamde 'Onderzoekskader' van de K.U.Leuven. Gezien zijn ruime expertise en lange loopbaanhistoriek binnen de opeenvolgende steunpunten, is dit een te rechtvaardigen keuze.
- De centrale administratieve kracht van het Steunpunt wordt aangesteld voor de volledige looptijd van het Steunpunt WSE (80%).
- In de CELM hebben de onderzoekers een statuut van wetenschappelijk medewerker. Een aantal medewerkers van het vorige Steunpunt WSE worden gecontinueerd met het oog op kennisoverdracht. Voor drie medewerkers wordt een tewerkstelling voor de volledige looptijd voorzien, voor één medewerker een aanstelling van twee jaar omwille van de beperking in de tijd van de opdracht (mogelijk gevolgd door halftijdse aanwerving van een nieuwe kracht). Eén bijkomende medewerker wordt deels gefinancierd uit middelen van AGORA-projecten. CELM zal kunnen rekenen op een bezetting van 5,5 tot 6 FTE.
- De personeelsinzet voor de drie Centres SERC, CALP en CCR varieert naargelang de omvang en timing van de onderzoeksopdrachten. Het aantal en statuut van de medewerkers alsook eventuele vervangingen worden bepaald door de co-promotoren (na afstemming met het Dagelijks Bestuur) in functie van het beschikbare budget. Bij de personeelsbezetting wordt bewust een evenwicht gezocht tussen stabiliteit en flexibiliteit (in functie van een wijzigende beleidsagenda).

### **3.4 Financieel beheer**

De centrale uitgangspunten m.b.t. het financieel beheer, zijn:

1. Het budget van het Steunpunt WSE wordt beheerd door hoofdpromotor en coördinator. Voor de financiering van de centres wordt gewerkt met door elke coördinator te beheren deelbudgetten.
2. Elke co-promotor in het consortium spant zich maximaal in om het indicatief jaarbudget te verruimen door aanvullende prospectie (bv. AGORA, FWO, Belspo, BOF, e.d.). Het Steunpunt WSE wordt opgebouwd met de voorziene basisfinanciering, maar elke onderzoekslijn draagt de verantwoordelijkheid haar enveloppe te verruimen met complementaire financiering om zo het draagvlak voor beleidsvoorbereidend arbeidsmarktonderzoek te versterken.
3. Elke instelling binnen het consortium voert een eigen boekhouding m.b.t. het deelbudget waarvoor zij verantwoordelijk is. Deze deelboekhoudingen worden geconsolideerd in een centrale boekhouding. Deze consolidatie zal volledig binnen de K.U.Leuven (Faculteit Economie en Bedrijfswetenschappen en centrale financiële administratie K.U.Leuven) gebeuren. Er bestaat geen



probleem om de boekhouding van het Steunpunt WSE gescheiden te houden van andere activiteiten van de K.U.Leuven gezien er voldoende ervaring is met voorgaande projecten waar tevens de vereisten van een aparte boekhouding, budget, verlies- en winstrekening, gesteld werden.

4. Er wordt gewerkt met een 4-jaren begroting (cf. deel 4 voor detailbegroting), die jaarlijks wordt herzien. Op het einde van het jaar wordt een formele evaluatie van de financiële resultaten gemaakt en overgedragen aan de opdrachtgever.

### **3.5 Kwaliteitscontrole**

Het Steunpunt WSE staat garant voor de kwaliteit van de output en interne processen.

**Inputcontrole.** De hoofdpromotor en coördinatoren beschikken over de nodige expertise om het meerjarenprogramma (deel 3) inhoudelijk gestalte te geven. Hiervoor hebben ze de vereiste ervaring (cf. voorgaande beleidsvoorbereidende en andere projecten) en methodologische expertise (cf. inhoudelijke luiken). Ze kunnen terugvallen op een uitgebreid netwerk van contacten bij overheidsinstanties, sociale partners en bedrijfswereld. Zij behoren tevens tot gerespecteerde onderzoeksnetwerken met nationale en internationale vertakkingen. Voor CELM wordt de reeds aanwezige expertise uit het vorige Steunpunt WSE (en voordien WAV) overgenomen, o.a. ervaring met de ontwikkeling van arbeidsrekeningen, met het Datawarehouse Arbeidsmarkt en Sociale Bescherming, etc.

**Procescontrole.** Op centraal niveau zal het dagelijks bestuur een belangrijke rol spelen bij de voortgangscntrole. Het zwaartepunt van de procescontrole wordt echter in de thematische werkgroepen gelegd, precies omdat daar alle benodigde expertise aanwezig is, zowel uit het Steunpunt als van externen, en zowel uit wetenschappelijke hoek als uit beleidskringen. Wat het dagelijkse management betreft, zal de coördinator de activiteiten van CELM op regelmatige en formele manier opvolgen, terwijl de co-promotoren de voortgang van de projecten voor hun rekening nemen. Zij zullen bijzondere aandacht besteden aan het garanderen van de wetenschappelijke standaarden en de beleidsrelevantie van het uitgevoerde onderzoek. De beleidsrelevantie van de activiteiten wordt tevens afgetoetst bij de Stuurgroep Strategisch Arbeidsmarktonderzoek.

**Outputcontrole.** Het Steunpunt WSE heeft een belangrijke dienstverlenende functie. In functie van de valorisatie van de resultaten en de netwerkversterking wordt Over.Werk, het tijdschrift van het huidige Steunpunt WSE, in een aangepast format gecontinueerd. Producten die aanleunen bij de monitoringfunctie worden zoveel mogelijk via de WSE-website aangeboden. Er wordt verder een eigen reeks van WSE Reports gecontinueerd als kanaal voor publicatie van onderzoeksresultaten en beleidsstandpunten. Deze worden elektronisch aangeboden via de WSE-website.

Verder is organisatorisch voorzien in een sterke verankering van expertise, o.a. door de toevoeging van co-promotoren aan de centres. Zij nemen de outputcontrole op de resultaten van de junior medewerkers voor hun rekening. Dit moet versterkt worden door inspanningen op het vlak van kennisdeling (cf. supra: sharepoint, werkgroepen). Tevens worden de medewerkers gestimuleerd hun resultaten voor externe validering te presenteren op nationale en internationale conferenties en de wetenschappelijke kwaliteit af te toetsen bij nationale en internationale journals. Ten vijfde staat de

Stuurgroep Strategisch Arbeidsmarktonderzoek in voor de outputcontrole op het vlak van beleidsrelevantie.

### **3.6 Huisvesting van het steunpunt**

Het Centre of Excellence for Labour Market Monitoring CELM (de vorige Unit Data-Ontwikkeling) en het centrale beheer (centrale coördinatie en ondersteuning) worden gehuisvest in de gebouwen van het vorige Steunpunt WSE (Parkstraat 45 bus 5303, 3000 Leuven). Hier wordt ook een shared office ingericht, voorzien van de nodige computerinfrastructuur, voor de medewerkers van het Departement WSE die samenwerken met CELM, evenals voor de medewerkers van andere WSE Centres die tijdelijk werken op databestanden van CELM of tijdelijk samenwerken met wetenschappelijk medewerkers van CELM. Deze locatie is ook het centrale contactpunt van het Steunpunt WSE.

De coördinatoren, co-promotoren en wetenschappelijke medewerkers van de verschillende WSE Centres worden gehuisvest in de instelling/entiteit waar ze formeel tewerkgesteld zijn. De academische overheden en hogescholen garanderen deze huisvesting.

### **3.7 Beroep op algemene diensten en faciliteiten universiteit**

Het Steunpunt WSE kan beroep doen op de bestaande algemene diensten zoals ICT, bibliotheek, financiën, personeel, onthaal, communicatie, etc. ... zowel van de universiteiten als van de betrokken hogeschool.

#### **3.7.1 ICT-ondersteuning**

De ICT-ondersteuning van CELM, i.e. computerinfrastructuur, onderhoud website, aankoop soft- en hardware, etc. zal volledig verlopen via de Dienst Informatica van de Faculteit Economie en Bedrijfswetenschappen van de K.U.Leuven. Ook de ICT-ondersteuning van het Onderzoeksinstituut voor Arbeid en Samenleving HIVA wordt sedert enige tijd mede ondersteund door de Dienst Informatica van de Faculteit Economie en Bedrijfswetenschappen. De ICT-ondersteuning voor de verschillende onderzoeksgroepen verloopt via de instelling/entiteit die de coördinatoren, co-promotoren en medewerkers huisvest. Deze instellingen/entiteiten leveren ICT-ondersteuning op logistiek en technisch vlak vanuit de doelstelling om de werking van het Steunpunt WSE zoveel mogelijk te faciliteren en ervoor te zorgen dat de onderzoekers zich in ideale omstandigheden kunnen wijden aan hun kerntaken.

Inzake de logistieke en technische ondersteuning worden volgende faciliteiten aangeboden:

- mogelijkheid tot voordelige aankopen van hardware;
- breed gamma aan software voor administratief en academisch gebruik, aangeboden via campuslicenties;
- centrale helpdesk voor oplossen van computertechnische problemen;
- toegang tot geavanceerde applicaties om de projecten zowel administratief als financieel op te volgen (e.g. SAP-systeem);
- maatwerk en ondersteuning van webgebaseerde tools voor online samenwerking en verspreiding van informatie via het internet;

- afgeschermdde webomgeving waar onderzoekers kunnen communiceren (synchroon en asynchroon), informatie en werkdocumenten kunnen delen, een kalender en agenda bijhouden, ...;
- assistentie bij opbouw en onderhoud van de website voor verspreiding van resultaten.

### **3.7.2 Bibliotheken**

De statistische bronnen en beleidsinformatie in verband met werk en sociale economie worden beheerd door CELM (in elektronische vorm). Wetenschappelijke reeksen, tijdschriften en boeken worden geïntegreerd in de bibliotheek van de Faculteit Economie en Bedrijfswetenschappen (K.U.Leuven), zodat maximale integratie met de daar aanwezige, uitgebreide collecties gerealiseerd wordt en beroep gedaan kan worden op het professionele beheer van deze bibliotheek. Alle medewerkers, ook deze van de andere partners uit het consortium en deze van het Departement WSE zullen een bibliotheekkaart krijgen, een mogelijkheid die overigens ook bestaat voor externe, niet aan K.U.Leuven verbonden WSE-contacten.

Het Steunpunt WSE kan verder gebruik maken van de diensten en faciliteiten van de universiteits- en hogeschoolbibliotheken. De elektronische informatie is beschikbaar via de servers van de bibliotheek of via externe servers op basis van licentieovereenkomsten. Via VPN toegang is raadpleging van vrijwel alle databanken en elektronische tijdschriften ook van buitenaf mogelijk. De elektronische bibliotheken kennen in alle universiteiten en hogescholen een enorme uitbreiding. Vrijwel alle tijdschriften van de grote uitgevers als Elsevier, Springer, Blackwell en Wiley zijn elektronisch beschikbaar.

### **3.7.3 Financiën en personeel**

De centrale departementen Financiën van de diverse instellingen worden ingezet voor het beheer van de steunpuntfinanciering die toegewezen is aan de betreffende instelling. De coördinator is in dit geval aanspreekpunt en eindverantwoordelijke voor alle budgetbewegingen. Jaarlijks wordt een begroting opgemaakt per deelbudget dat toegekend is aan een coördinator. Deze begrotingen worden jaarlijks geconsolideerd in één steunpuntbegroting. Dit gebeurt aan de K.U.Leuven, waar de financiële diensten zelf ook instaan voor de begroting van CELM en het budget voor het centraal management. De administratief ondersteunende kracht van het Steunpunt WSE wordt voor de (consolidatie van de) begroting bijgestaan door één van de onderzoekskoördinatoren van de Faculteit Economie en Bedrijfswetenschappen. De Personeelsdienst biedt ondersteuning bij het aantrekken en aanwerven van steunpuntpersoneel.

### **3.7.4 Locatie en organisatie bijeenkomsten**

Voor de organisatie van bijeenkomsten, congressen of andere valorisatie-activiteiten van het Steunpunt kan beroep gedaan worden op de vergaderzalen, leslokalen en aula's van de universiteiten en hogescholen. Indien nodig, kan beroep gedaan worden op de diensten communicatie voor de bekendmaking van events naar de buitenwereld of hulp bij grafische vormgeving van steunpuntproducten.

### **3.7.5 Doctoraatsopleiding**

Steunpuntmedewerkers die in het kader van het onderzoek binnen het Steunpunt een doctoraat maken, genieten de doctoraatsopleiding aan de Universiteit Antwerpen, de Universiteit Gent of de K.U.Leuven. Deze opleidingen beogen in eerste instantie een gedegen methodologische vorming en kennismaking met het onderzoek binnen het thematisch domein van het doctoraat. Ook het stimuleren van de mondelinge en schriftelijke (interdisciplinaire) communicatie en beheersing van academisch Engels behoren standaard tot het aanbod. De invulling van de doctoraatsopleiding verschilt van instelling tot instelling.

Ook voor de andere wetenschappelijk medewerkers worden vanuit de instellingen mogelijkheden geboden tot verdere competentieontwikkeling, o.a. in de vorm van research seminars of specifieke bijscholingen (bv. cursussen statistiek, ICT, academisch Engels).

### **3.7.6 Ter beschikking stellen van databanken voor een ruimer onderzoekspubliek**

De veelheid aan arbeidsmarktstatistieken (op Europees, Belgisch, Vlaams en subregionaal niveau) wordt via de website van het Steunpunt WSE ter beschikking gesteld aan derden (beleid, academici, studenten...). Het CELM opereert eveneens als verdeelcenter voor arbeidsmarktgegevens die niet online beschikbaar zijn (hotline arbeidsmarktinformatie). In het kader van haar dienstverlenende functie, maar steeds binnen de grenzen van de privacywetgeving en protocollen met de statistiekleveranciers, is het Steunpunt WSE ook bereid om databanken beschikbaar te stellen voor andere onderzoekers. Deze ruimere dienstverlening krijgt onder andere vorm in het kader van de European Union Labour Force Survey microdata (EU-LFS). De EU-LFS database wordt door CELM, binnen de klijntijnen van de contractuele bepalingen, ook ter beschikking gesteld aan andere onderzoekers van de Faculteit Economie en Bedrijfswetenschappen aan de K.U.Leuven. Voor het ter beschikking stellen van administratieve databanken (bv. RSZ) wordt steeds vooraf teruggekoppeld naar de statistiekleveranciers. Mits uitdrukkelijk akkoord van de betrokken instelling kunnen specifieke databases of deelbestanden ook voor andere onderzoekers beschikbaar gesteld worden. De privacywetgeving laat niet toe om microdata uit het Datawarehouse Arbeidsmarkt & Sociale Bescherming door te spelen aan derden. Hiervoor zullen de geïnteresseerde onderzoekers steeds zelf een gemotiveerde aanvraag moeten indienen. CELM is wel bereid om vanuit een jarenlange expertise advies te verlenen bij het voorbereiden en opstellen van de aanvraagdossiers.

Voor het Departement WSE van de Vlaamse overheid wordt evenwel voorzien in een quasi onbeperkte toegang tot de primaire databases. De centrale databases (o.a. EAK en DWH AM&SB) worden gezamenlijk door CELM en Departement WSE verzameld. Contracten in verband met de databases worden ondertekend door beide instellingen (hoofdpromotor Steunpunt WSE en secretaris-generaal van het Departement WSE) zodat beleidsmedewerkers van het Departement WSE en onderzoekers van het Steunpunt WSE autonome toegang hebben tot de datasets in het kader van de arbeidsmarktmonitoring. Hiervoor worden ook gemeenschappelijke procedures bij de privacycommissie doorlopen en worden afspraken gemaakt voor een gemeenschappelijk databeveiligingsprotocol.

### **3.8 Tijd (co-)promotoren en academisch of onderwijzend personeel niet op de loonlijst van het steunpunt WSE**

#### **Faculteit Economie en Bedrijfswetenschappen, K.U.Leuven**

Het overzicht dat volgt, heeft betrekking op het Onderzoekscentrum Personeel & Organisatie aan de Faculteit Economie en Bedrijfswetenschappen (K.U.Leuven).

#### **Prof. Dr. Luc Sels**

Gezien de functie van hoofdpromotor van het Steunpunt WSE is de inzet moeilijk in een aantal dagen of weken te specificeren. Het management van het steunpunt en vooral ook van de activiteiten van CELM krijgt nagenoeg dagelijks aandacht. Daarnaast is er ook de inzet als onderzoeker en (co-)auteur van de rapporten van CELM en CCR en een belangrijke rol in de beleidsadvisering.

#### **Prof. Dr. Marijke Verbruggen**

Marijke Verbruggen is als docente (Bijzonder Onderzoeksfonds) actief in het Onderzoekscentrum Personeel & Organisatie. Ze neemt een belangrijke inhoudelijke begeleidingsrol op in CCR, meer bepaald voor de coördinatie van het onderzoek rond flexibel zoekgedrag en heroriëntatie in loopbanen. Gezien ze veel ervaring heeft met de meting van effecten van o.a. loopbaanbegeleiding (doctoraal proefschrift) is haar expertise ook nuttig in het meer op interventies gerichte CALP. De inzet is moeilijk in dagen of weken uit te drukken, en maakt deel uit van de reguliere begeleidingsopdracht als ZAP-lid. De inzet zal variëren naargelang de fase van het onderzoek rond zoekgedrag.

#### **Dr. Nicky Dries**

Nicky Dries is als doctor-assistent actief in het Onderzoekscentrum Personeel & Organisatie. Ze is experte in loopbaanonderzoek en zal in die hoedanigheid optreden als co-auteur van sommige rapporten in CCR, meer bepaald in het onderzoek rond transitionele loopbanen. Op jaarbasis wordt deze inbreng geschat op 10 à 15 werkdagen.

#### **Stijn Braes**

Stijn Braes wordt deels gefinancierd op het Steunpunt WSE (ongeveer 1/3<sup>de</sup> van de loonkost), en deels op AGORA-projecten die gerelateerd zijn aan de uitbouw van het Datawarehouse Arbeidsmarkt en Sociale Bescherming. Gezien het belang van dit Datawarehouse voor de activiteiten van CELM, zal zijn inzet voor 100% gerelateerd zijn aan het Steunpunt WSE. Hij zal ook gehuisvest worden in de lokalen van het Steunpunt WSE.

#### **Sarah Vansteenkiste**

Sarah Vansteenkiste wordt gefinancierd op andere projectmiddelen van het Onderzoekscentrum Personeel & Organisatie. Ze zal zich in haar doctoraal proefschrift richten op de thematiek van flexibel zoekgedrag en heroriëntatie en zal vanuit die rol ook de onderzoekslijn CCR versterken. Haar inzet zal voor 50% gerelateerd zijn aan activiteiten van het Steunpunt WSE.

### **Mevr. Hanneke Van Sloten**

Werkzaam als onderzoekscoördinator aan de Faculteit Economie en Bedrijfswetenschappen. Zij zal de hoofdpromotor ondersteunen bij het personeelsbeleid en financieel beleid van het Steunpunt, maar wordt financieel niet ten laste genomen van het Steunpunt WSE. De geschatte inzet: gemiddeld een 2-tal dagen per maand in functie van ondersteuning van de administratieve kracht van het Steunpunt WSE.

### **Lessius University College**

#### **Prof. Dr. Anneleen Forrier**

Anneleen Forrier is als hoofddocent verbonden aan Lessius Antwerpen (Departement Handelswetenschappen). Ze is tevens als geassocieerd hoofddocent verbonden aan de Faculteit Economie en Bedrijfswetenschappen (K.U.Leuven, Research Centre for Organisation Studies). Ze is experte in loopbaanonderzoek en in onderzoek i.v.m. employability en zal in die hoedanigheid optreden als co-promotor in CCR en als co-auteur van sommige rapporten van CCR, meer bepaald in het onderzoek rond transitionele loopbanen. Op jaarbasis wordt haar inbreng geschat op 10 à 15 werkdagen.

#### **Prof. Dr. Sophie De Winne**

Sophie De Winne is als hoofddocent verbonden aan Lessius Antwerpen (Departement Handelswetenschappen). Ze is tevens als geassocieerd hoofddocent verbonden aan de Faculteit Economie en Bedrijfswetenschappen (K.U.Leuven, Research Centre for Organisation Studies). Ze is experte op het domein van personnel economics. Zij zal de CELM mee ondersteunen, vooral op het vlak van de methodologische expertise en in concrete onderzoekstoepassingen die in lijn liggen van de Arbeidsrekening. Op jaarbasis wordt haar inbreng geschat op 10 werkdagen.

#### **Prof. Dr. Ilke Van Beveren**

Ilke Van Beveren is als docent verbonden aan Lessius Antwerpen (Departement Handelswetenschappen). Ze is tevens als geassocieerd docent verbonden aan de Faculteit Economie en Bedrijfswetenschappen (K.U.Leuven, Centrum voor Economische Studiën). Ze is experte op de domeinen van applied econometrics, personnel economics en firm dynamics. Ze zal vanuit die achtergrond instaan voor de econometrische ondersteuning van CELM. Op jaarbasis wordt haar inbreng geschat op 10 werkdagen.

### **Onderzoeksinstituut voor Arbeid en Samenleving – HIVA**

Het HIVA is een multidisciplinair onderzoeksinstituut aan de K.U.Leuven, bestaande uit een team van meer dan 80 medewerkers. Hieronder geven we aan welke HIVA-onderzoekers expertise ter beschikking stellen (binnen en buiten financiering van het Steunpunt WSE).

### **Dr. Caroline Gijselinckx**

Dr. Caroline Gijselinckx is onderzoeksleider aan het Onderzoeksinstituut voor Arbeid en Samenleving (HIVA-K.U.Leuven). Ze coördineert en voert er onderzoek naar sociale economie, coöperatief ondernemen en middenveld. Ze kadert haar onderzoek in het denk- en handelingskader van 'empowerment', met bijzondere aandacht voor de organisationele componenten. Voor de coördinatie van het Social Economy Research Centre (SERC) van het Steunpunt WSE, en de begeleiding van WP1a en WP2 wordt ze gedurende de eerste vier jaar à rato van 1,7 maand (VTE), en gedurende het laatste jaar voor 1,3 maand (VTE) op het Steunpunt WSE gefinancierd.

### **Miet Lamberts**

Miet Lamberts is onderzoeksleider aan het Onderzoeksinstituut voor Arbeid en Samenleving (HIVA-K.U.Leuven). Zij heeft expertise opgebouwd rond de duurzame integratie van personen uit kansengroepen op de arbeidsmarkt. Als onderzoeksfocus kijkt zij hierbij voornamelijk naar processen op de werkvloer en hoe het beleid en andere actoren deze kunnen beïnvloeden. Zij zal in het kader van het Social Economy Research Centre (SERC) van het Steunpunt WSE de begeleiding van het WP3 'Analysis of job creation opportunities for target group workers in the regular labour market' op zich nemen (financiering ten belope van 1 onderzoeksmaand).

### **Katrien Steenssens**

Katrien Steenssens is senior onderzoeker aan het Onderzoeksinstituut voor Arbeid en Samenleving (HIVA-K.U.Leuven). Met empowerment als denk- en handelingskader voert zij onderzoek naar armoede, sociale uitsluiting en integratie. Steunend op verworven inzichten in onder meer het Equal-project 'Labour for Neighbour, het VIONA-project 'W<sup>2</sup>: Werk-en Welzijnstrajecten op maat' en de conceptnota 'Empowerment en activering van mensen in armoede' zal zij zowel op inhoudelijk als methodologisch vlak haar expertise op vlak van empowerment inbrengen, in het bijzonder in synergie met het werkpakket 'Empowerment en Participatie' van het voorgestelde Steunpunt VLAS (Vlaams Armoedesteunpunt). Katrien Steenssens wordt niet gefinancierd op het budget van het Steunpunt WSE.

### **Prof. Dr. Tine Van Regenmortel**

Tine Van Regenmortel is hoofd van de onderzoeksgroep 'Armoede, maatschappelijke integratie en migratie' van het Onderzoeksinstituut voor Arbeid en Samenleving (HIVA-K.U.Leuven) en doceert in de Master Sociaal Werk binnen de Faculteit Sociale Wetenschappen van de K.U.Leuven. Ze is tevens verbonden aan de Fontys Hogeschool Sociale Studies in Eindhoven als lector 'Empowerment en maatschappelijk kwetsbare groepen'. Ze is (inter)nationaal erkend als expert op het vlak van empowerment. Ze behaalde haar PhD op dit thema en heeft sindsdien talrijke doorvertalingen (methodes, instrumenten) gedaan naar verschillende (kwetsbare) doelgroepen en thema's. Zo is er de laatste jaren een sterke beleidsinteresse voor empowerment m.b.t. het thema activering voor groepen die verder van de arbeidsmarkt staan (cfr. W<sup>2</sup>-trajecten, krachtgerichte activering). Verschillende projecten hieromtrent (gefinancierd door o.a. VDAB, VIONA, ESF/Equal, Vlaams Minister van Werk) werden onder haar leiding uitgevoerd of zijn lopende. Ze is tevens als promotor betrokken in het nieuwe

Steunpunt Armoede (VLAS) voor de onderzoekslijn rond Empowerment en Participatie. Ze zal het promotorschap opnemen van het doctoraat van de doctoraatsbursaal die voor het Steunpunt WSE zal worden aangetrokken en er zal werken op de thematiek van 'empowerment en de sociale economie'. Dit valt buiten de financiering van het Steunpunt WSE.

#### **Faculteit Economie en Bedrijfskunde – Universiteit Gent**

##### **Prof. Dr. Bart Cockx**

Bart Cockx is als gewoon hoogleraar verbonden aan de onderzoekscentrum Study Hive for Economic Research and Public Policy Analysis (SHERPPA) van de UGent. Hij coördineert het onderzoek dat het actief arbeidsmarktbeleid evalueert binnen het steunpunt. Vanuit deze functie zal hij het onderzoek aansturen en wetenschappelijk begeleiden. Gezien zijn brede expertise op het gebied van arbeidseconomie en econometrische methoden zal hij deze expertise ook ten gepaste tijde inzetten als ondersteuning van de andere onderzoeksgroepen binnen het Steunpunt. De inzet is moeilijk in tijd uit te drukken.

#### **Hogeschool Gent**

##### **Prof. Dr. Nathalie Moray**

Nathalie Moray is als docente actief in de Hogeschool Gent, en tevens als gastprofessor aan **de** Faculteit Economie en Bedrijfskunde van de Universiteit Gent. Haar expertise situeert zich op het domein van sociale innovatie en ondernemerschap, sociale economie en coöperatief ondernemerschap. Vanuit die achtergrond zal zij mee de begeleiding opnemen van SERC. Haar inzet wordt geschat op 15 à 20 werkdagen per jaar.

#### **Faculteit Sociale en Politieke Wetenschappen – Universiteit Antwerpen**

##### **Prof. Dr. Dimitri Mortelmans**

Dimitri Mortelmans maakt deel uit van het Centre for Career Research (CCR) en zal hiervan de coördinatie op zich nemen. Hij zal in de eerste plaats instaan voor de begeleiding van de in het CCR werkzame personeelslid in Antwerpen. Daarnaast zal hij deelnemen aan het ruimere overleg en de sturing in het steunpunt. Gezien deze taken behoren tot de normale bezigheden binnen het ZAP-kader en bovendien zeer wisselend in de tijd zijn, is het niet mogelijk hiervan een exacte schatting in dagen of weken te maken.

##### **Dorien Van Looy**

Dorien Van Looy is AAP-lid van het Centrum voor Longitudinaal en Levensloop Onderzoek (CELLO). Zij is gespecialiseerd in eindeloopbaanproblematiek en zal als coauteur optreden in de betrokken



werkpakketten. Zij wordt niet gefinancierd op de middelen van het steunpunt. De geschatte inzet: gemiddeld drie dagen per maand.

### **Annelize Watzeels**

Annelize Watzeels is werkzaam als boekhoudspecialist aan de Faculteit Politieke en Sociale Wetenschappen. Zij zal de Antwerpse co-promotor ondersteunen bij de financiële afrekening van het Steunpunt, maar wordt financieel niet ten laste genomen van het Steunpunt WSE. De geschatte inzet: gemiddeld één dag per maand.

## **Antwerp Management School – Universiteit Antwerpen**

### **Prof. Dr. Ans De Vos**

Ans De Vos is als professor verbonden aan de Antwerp Management School. Zij is tevens verbonden als Research Fellow aan de Faculteit Economie en Bedrijfswetenschappen (K.U.Leuven; Research Centre for Organisation Studies). Zij is experte in onderzoek naar loopbaancompetenties en hun invloed op loopbaantransities, en zal vanuit die achtergrond een begeleidende rol opnemen in CCR en ook als auteur van studies op de WSE-loopbaansurvey optreden. Haar inzet wordt geschat op 10 tot 15 werkdagen per jaar.

### **3.9 Eigen logistieke en materiële inbreng**

De **centrale website** van het Steunpunt WSE wordt verder ontwikkeld (zie opdracht van CELM). Deze website zal het Steunpunt een eigen identiteit geven, maar ook functioneren als eerste diffusiekanaal voor de resultaten van het Steunpunt (WSE Reports, digitale toegang tot artikels Over.Werk, simulatietools werkzaamheidsgraden, draaischijf voor informatie over de Vlaamse arbeidsmarkt). De website wordt ondersteund door de ICT-diensten van de Faculteit Economie en Bedrijfswetenschappen (K.U.Leuven) en deels uitbesteed (momenteel aan Kunstmaan).

Naast het algemene logo van het steunpuntenprogramma (dat o.a. mee opgenomen wordt in publicaties en communicatie over steunpunt WSE) zal het Steunpunt WSE ook een **eigen logo** behouden dat de eigenheid van het Steunpunt mede zal onderstrepen.

## **4. Meerjarenbegroting en personeelsinzet**

### **Bijlage**