

Re-BOrn

REturn to work after Burn-Out

DURATION
01/09/2022 – 01/12/2025

BUDGET
€ 314 711

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Context

Burn-out is an important public health issue, also in the Belgian federal administration.

Objectives

The general and long-term **aim** of this project cofounded by BOSA and BELSPO is to reduce burn-out prevalence and improve re-integration after long-term absence within the Belgian federal administration (FA). To realize this, the RE-BOrn project focuses on secondary and tertiary prevention of burn-out (BO). Practice- and policy-oriented strategic research is conducted using **3 work packages** (WP's), all adapted to the needs/context of the federal administration (FA).

Methodology

Each WP uses a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative data with qualitative content analyses and is concluded with practical recommendations for relevant stakeholders. Specifically, WP1 maps and evaluates the current re-integration practices and policies in the FA using document analysis and internal benchmarking, taking into account the best available evidence from the scientific literature. WP2 concerns the creation, evaluation, and improvement of a Burnout Treatment Program (BOTP) for workers from the Federal Administration (FA-BOTP), based on the BOTP launched in 2019 by the Federal Agency for Occupational Risks (FEDRIS; Hansez et al., 2019). First, using focus groups, the BOTP will be adapted with both person- and organization-centered interventions tailored to the FA (i.e., FA-BOTP). Second, using a pre/post-intervention follow-up, the FA-BOTP will be evaluated in terms of effectiveness on BO symptoms and absenteeism on the one hand, and participants' satisfaction with the FA-BOTP program on the other hand. Third, recommendations will be drafted aimed at implementing (future) BOTP's in the FA using the Delphi method. WP3 serves the implementation and evaluation of the newly developed 'Burnout Reintegration Monitor' self-assessment tool (BRM; Rooman et al., 2022), mapping how well one perceives to be re-integrated after burnout (quality of re-integration) and how a worker scores on the most proximal antecedents of re-integration quality after burn-out. Therefore, a cross-sectional survey will be used to evaluate and adjust the BRM to the context of the FA and a follow-up study will be conducted for a better understanding of the dynamic process of re-integration after burn-out. This project will pay attention to different socio-demographic groups prone to BO (e.g., gender) and consider whether different groups experience different barriers in the re-integration process.

Impact

There are **four main drivers** of this project. First, since the introduction of the 'Law on Well-being at work' in 1996, the focus shifted increasingly towards psychosocial aspects of occupational health and this with a multidisciplinary approach, as adopted by the RE-BOrn project. Yet, this law mainly focused on improving working conditions and primary prevention (Hansez & Mairiaux, 2016), which is laudable but disregards other kinds of prevention, like secondary and tertiary prevention. The RE-BOrn project addresses this gap by helping employees who suffered from burn-out to re-integrate and improve the overall quality of their working life in the FA. Second, in doing so, the RE-BOrn project also aims to advance scientific insights given the surprisingly little research attention that has been paid to secondary and tertiary prevention. Third, as part of the BRAIN-be 2.0 project call, the RE-BOrn project carries out policy-preparing research that helps to support the Relaunch Strategy of the Belgian economy and labour market post COVID-19. By supporting the quality of re-integration at work, the FA will be able to increase productivity and help reduce absenteeism and –hence– the overall cost of burn-out in the long term. Finally, in this way, the FA can also set an example for other organizations by supporting a healthy workforce, including re-integration after mental illness like burnout. These four drivers highlight the **project's organizational, scientific, policy, and societal impact**.



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The **overall valorisation strategy** is to work through a phased development approach with our follow-up committee members and stakeholders. Target groups are federal authorities, health professionals, prevention services, the working population, employers, social partners, academics, and policy makers. They will be invited to take part in the research through interviews, focus groups, meetings, and by implementing the preventive measures. Project findings will be communicated to all partners, stakeholders, the general public, and the research community.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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LINKS

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