



Vlaanderen
is veilig en rechtvaardig

Managing Case and Workload in Flemish Probation Services

Balancing data-driven and human perspectives

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Key focus

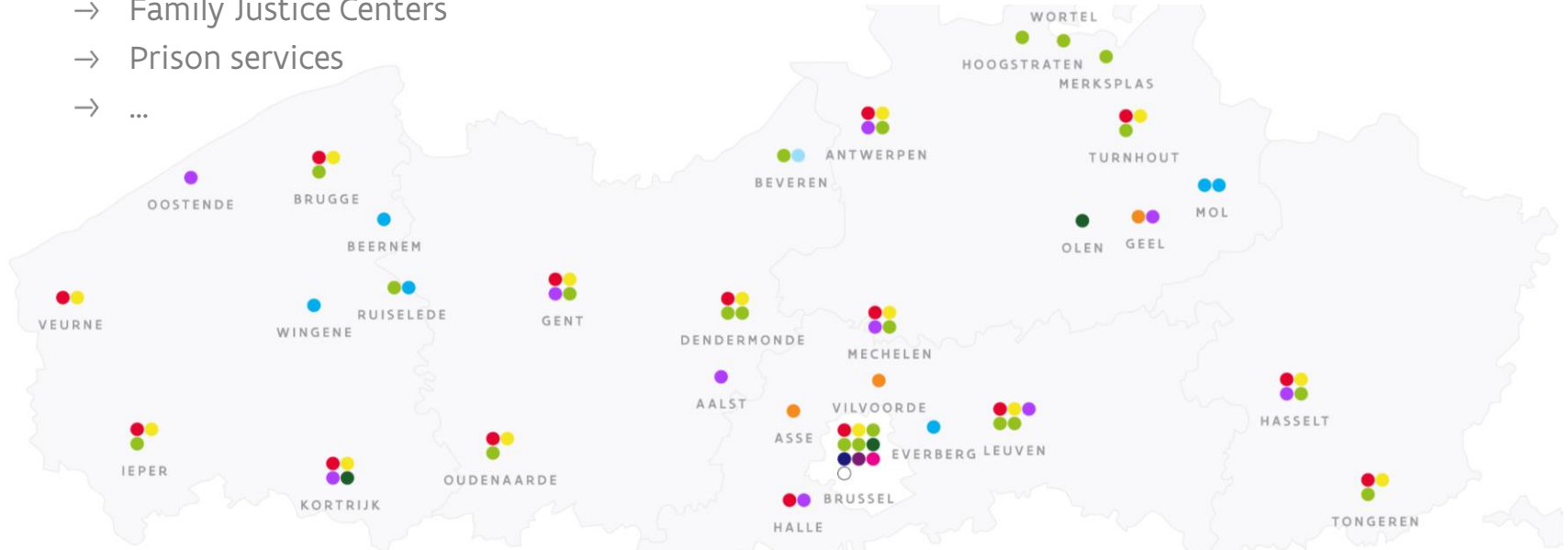
A blurred, monochromatic image of Lady Justice, the personification of the law. She is depicted as a woman with long hair, wearing a blindfold and holding a scale of justice in her left hand and a sword in her right. The image is rendered in shades of red and pink, matching the background.

- I. How do we manage rising cases in recent years?
- II. How can we balance a data-driven approach with the human dimension?

Flemish Agency of Justice

► Our services

- Flemish Probation Services
- Center for Electronic Monitoring
- Juvenile Rehabilitation Centers
- Family Justice Centers
- Prison services
- ...



Flemish Probation Service

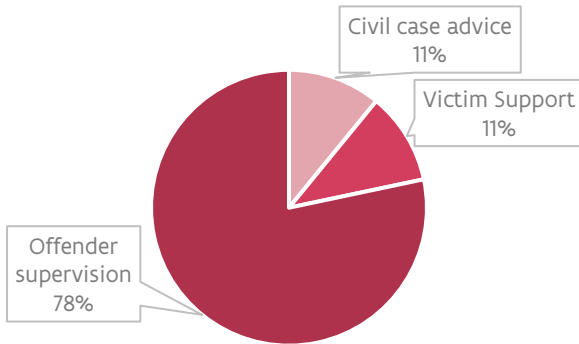
▶ Offender services

- Offender supervision (adults)
- Advice in criminal justice cases

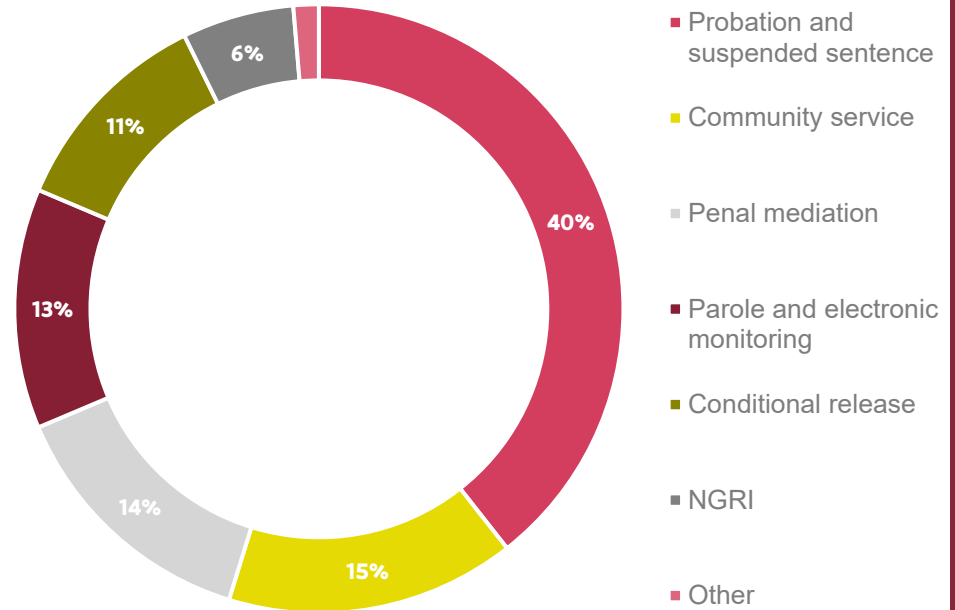
▶ 733 probation officers

- 574 for offender services

▶ 15 local probation offices



Probation officers in Flanders (2025)



% active cases in offender supervision (2026)

Rapid increase in cases since 2020

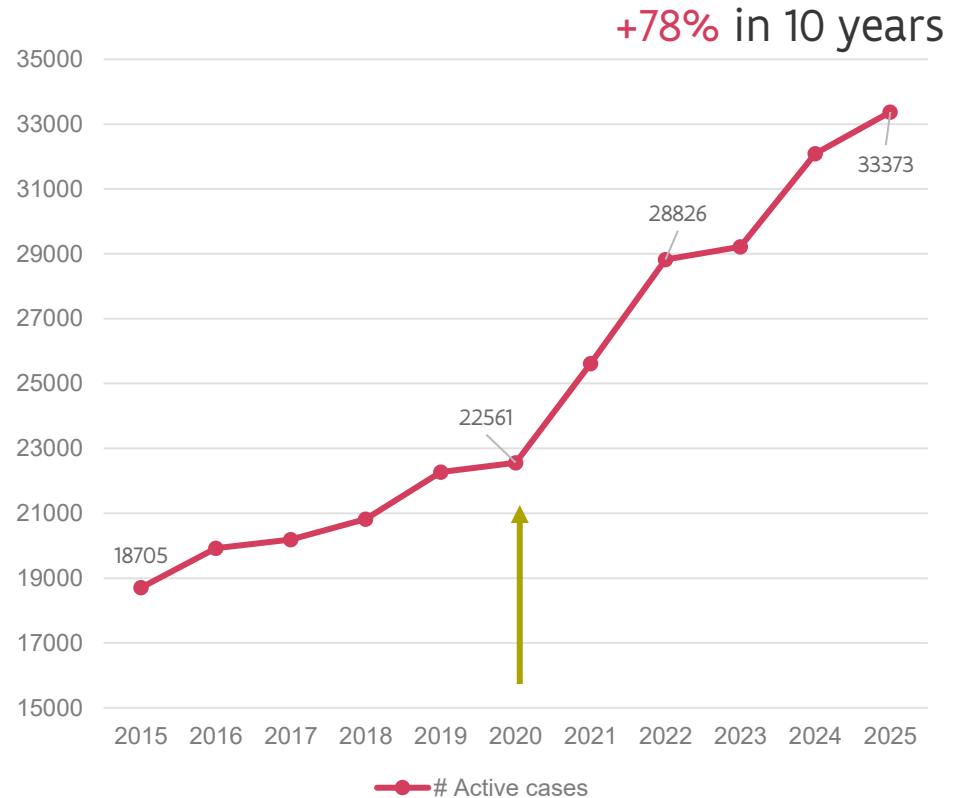
▶ More (focus on) community sanctions

- Changing mindset
- Overcrowding in prisons
- Legal changes
- Netwidening?

▶ Increase

- Not only in quantity
- But also complexity

▶ So how do we manage rising case and workload?



Tools we use in managing rising cases

▶ Digital tools

- Business Intelligence for monitoring
- Advanced workload measurement model
 - × Weight per case based on supervision type and length
 - × Workload expressed as % (not number of cases)
 - × Real-time monitoring by probation officers
- AI pilot projects: speech-to-text

▶ Importance of (middle) management

- And central coordination of staff capacity across local offices

▶ Organization of tasks

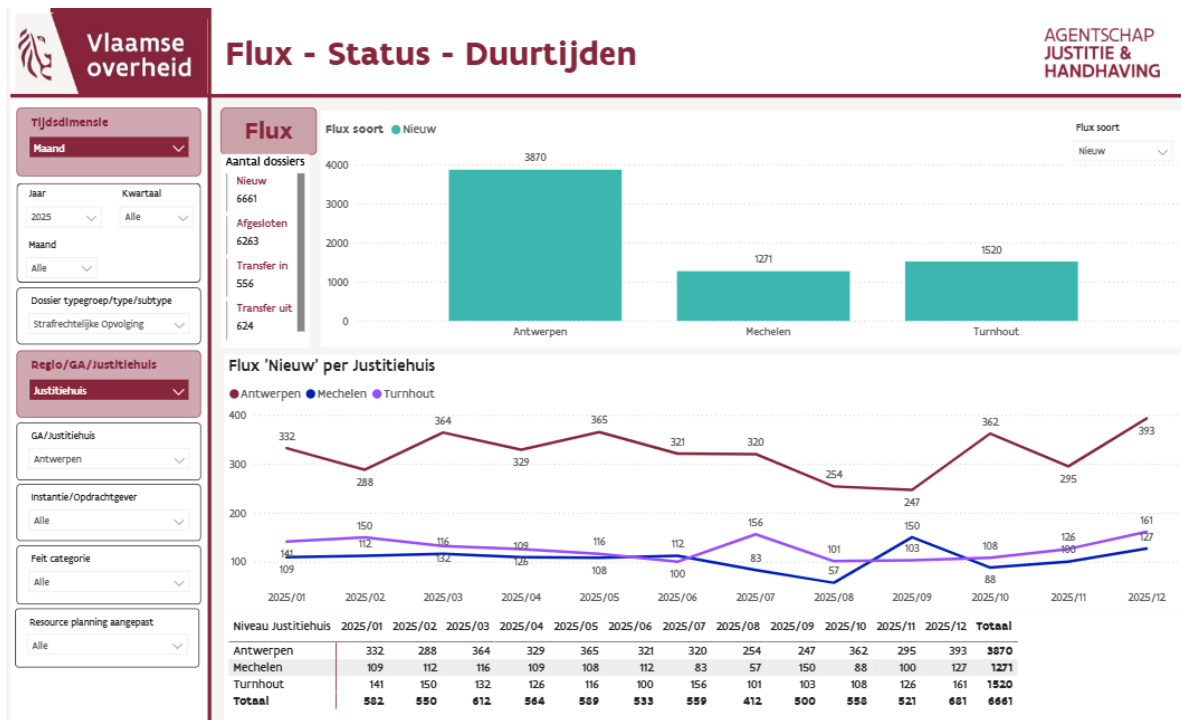
- Evaluating methodologies and procedures
- Preference for specialization over generalization

▶ But...

- ...sometimes you just need more probation officers



Business Intelligence: example



Probation and public policy in Flanders

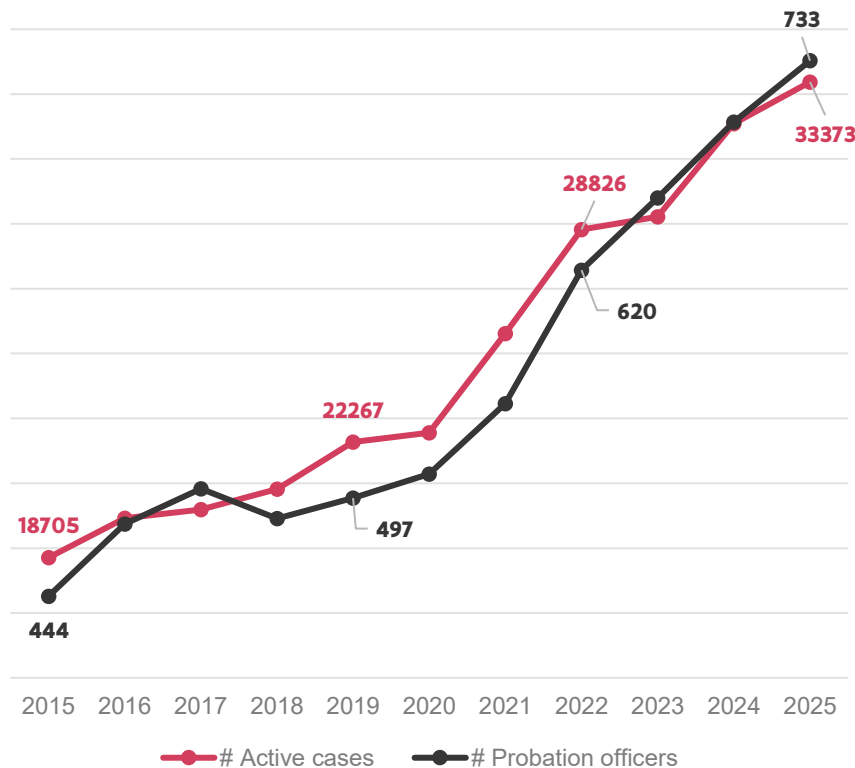
▶ Probation in Flanders

- Federal case-driven funding
- Recent political will to invest more in community-based sanctions

▶ Extra staff + measures

- Maintained caseload levels
- Reduced case backlog

▶ How can we convince policymakers to invest in probation?



Balancing data-driven and human perspectives

▶ Should and can we quantify probation work?

→ Data-driven strategies are important

- × Case and workload measurement
- × Risk assessment
- × Data to convince policymakers

→ But we must not forget the human dimension

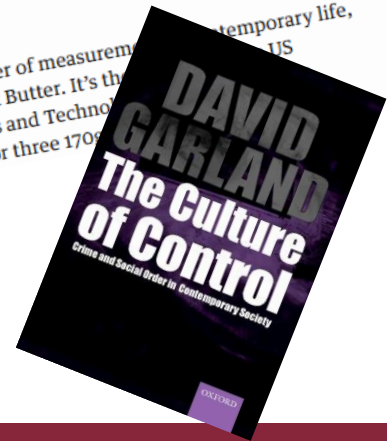
- × Not everything is measurable or controllable
- × Quality of probation work
- × Rehabilitation = goal
- × Staff wellbeing

Made to measure: why we can't stop quantifying our lives

From ancient Egyptian cubits to fitness tracker apps, humankind has long been seeking ever more ways to measure the world - and ourselves. But what is this doing to us?

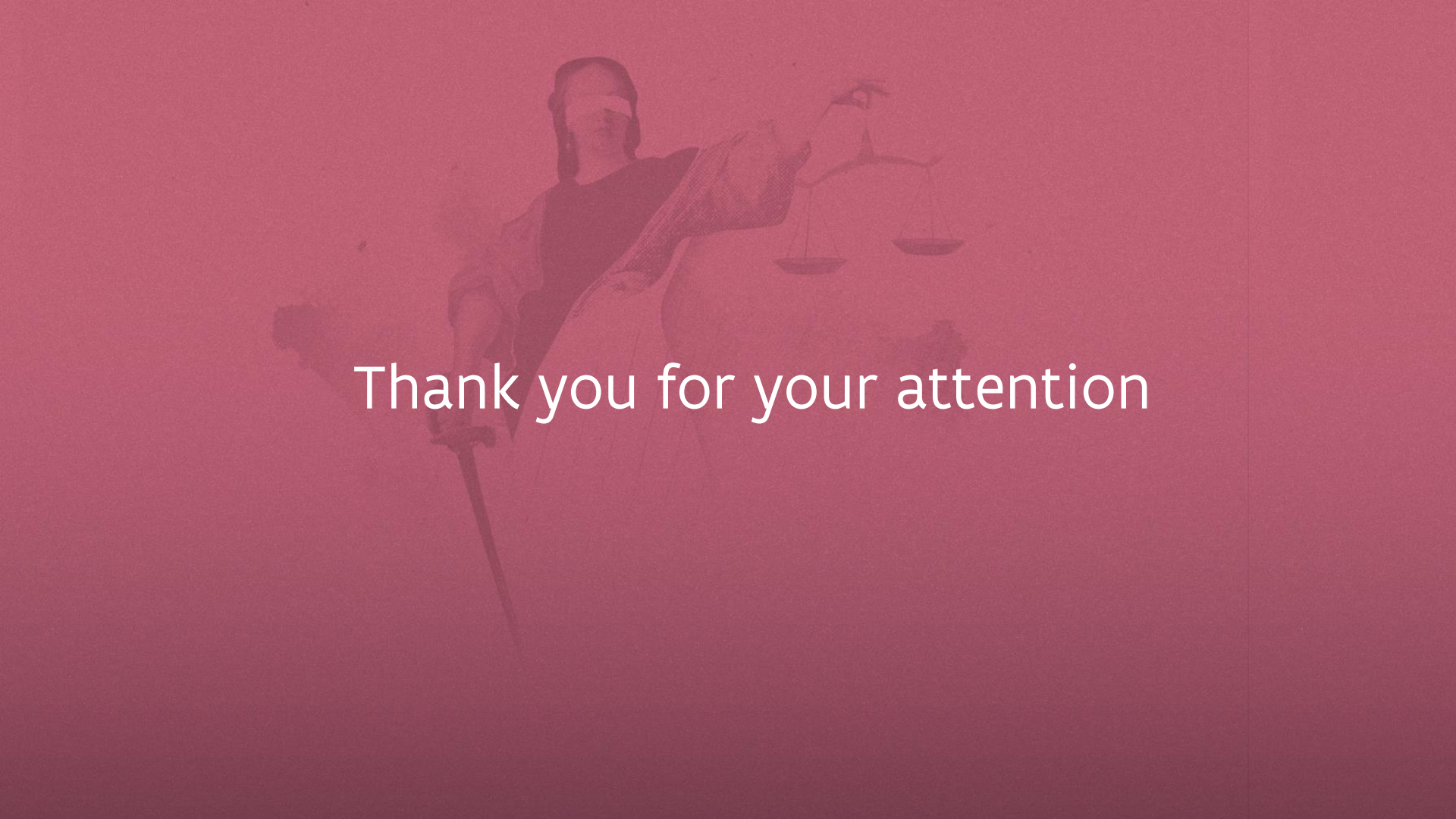
By James Vincent

If anything exemplifies the power of measurement it is Standard Reference Peanut Butter. It's the National Institute of Standards and Technology industry at a price of \$1,069 for three 170g



“The search for one universal benchmark, the long-standing hope for a “**magic number**” or a kind of probationary “**Holy Grail**” has not produced a solution that fits the realities of contemporary European probation. What has emerged instead is the need for a more differentiated and **context-sensitive approach.**”

- CEP (2026) Guidelines on Caseload and Workload in Probation

A blurred, monochromatic red-toned image of Lady Justice, the personification of the law. She is depicted wearing a blindfold, holding a pair of scales in her left hand, and a sword in her right hand. The image is centered in the background.

Thank you for your attention