



## **Flemish Youth Welfare Agency adopts Agile approach to keep up with changes**

Client name: Youth Welfare Agency, Flemish Dept. of Welfare,  
Public Health & Family

Location: Brussels, Belgium

Industry: Global public sector

**Challenges**

- Continuously update DOMINO, a software application with 10,000 users, with greater speed and efficiency than in the past
- Keep the technology aligned with a fast-changing business environment
- Improve data security in response to new government legislation

**Solutions**

- Establish multidisciplinary business/IT interlocked teams to develop the software
- Institute 3-week “sprints” for regular software delivery

**Results**

- Automated claims and risk management processes
- Reduced risk through data analysis
- DOMINO software is faster and better aligned with the agency’s fast-changing environment
- Software releases are produced on time and within budget
- Software now gets updated quickly in response to important legislative changes

Who says government IT has to be slow and plodding? Not a Flemish agency for youth welfare. Working with DXC Technology, the agency has kept an important software application up to date for thousands of internal and external users. And it has done so quickly with the latest Agile development methods.

Youth Welfare, known in Flemish as *agentschap Jongerenwelzijn*, is one of six agencies that make up the Flemish Domain of Welfare, Public Health and Family. Flemish-speaking Flanders is one of Belgium’s two biggest regions, the other being French-speaking Wallonia. In addition to Belgium’s federal government, each of the communities has its own parliament and authorities.

The Flemish youth welfare agency’s duties that are covered by DOMINO include:

- Implementing youth-care policies
- Supporting the juvenile courts
- Managing youth in suspicion of a precarious situation
- Organizing the Flemish borstals
- Managing the region’s Youth Welfare Fund, which finances expenses for special child support and underage criminals
- Subsidizing private facilities

The application in question is known as DOMINO, short for DOssier MINderjarigen Opvolling, or minors’ minutes follow-up. The application, developed with help from DXC, was originally designed for internal agency use only. Early functions included registering clients, storing case histories and compiling financial information. Since then, however, DOMINO has been shared with the Youth Welfare Agency’s external users as well. Today the software provides support to more than 10,000 users in some 160 user-group communities, both within and outside of the agency.

As the mix of services offered by Youth Welfare has changed, so have technical aspects of the DOMINO application:

- It has been upgraded to address new government legislation
- It has been updated to support a growing number of users and to do so safely and efficiently
- To quicken its speed of service, the agency has changed its application-development methodology from a traditional “waterfall” approach to a more modern one of Agile
- Shortly it will be upgraded so that it complies fully to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

A waterfall approach to software development is characterized by a series of discrete steps. Progress flows slowly and carefully through these steps, moving in just one direction, much like a waterfall. By contrast, Agile development delivers software iteratively and quickly. Agile developers work in self-organizing teams, release updates frequently, welcome revisions at any stage of their projects and consider failure as just another learning opportunity. Agile developers work in “scrums,” a framework involving a team of no more than a dozen members, and they complete their work in fixed time periods known as “sprints.”

## Driving efficiencies

The goal of moving to an Agile development process was to evolve the DOMINO application so that it keeps pace with Youth Welfare's changing business requirements.

When DXC originally helped introduce the Agile approach to Youth Welfare, the new development approach required the agency to change the way it formulated requirements and designed the application. DXC trained employees of the agency in Agile ways of working and coached them in the very first releases of this approach.

As part of this effort, DXC organized regular interactions among all parties involved in the DOMINO project, including project managers, scrum masters (a kind of Agile team leader), analysts and developers. This led to an application that met the agency's needs and accounted for changes to its business requirements.

Agile development has also enabled Youth Welfare to quickly address legislative changes. That's important, because when new laws are enacted, missing a deadline can result in an application being shut down. By implementing an Agile methodology, the DOMINO team has been able to make changes quickly and comply with both new and changing laws.

## Sprinting development

One way that speed is delivered is through Agile "sprints." During the development, DXC delivered a new working version of the DOMINO software to Youth Welfare every 3 weeks. Regular testing was part of each sprint, ensuring high-quality software with few defects. By delivering a working product at the end of each sprint, DXC also provided the agency with software that was easily maintainable, fit for purpose and ready to use.

Behind the scenes, the DOMINO development team comprised a local analyst, technical lead and developers, as well as a team of offshore developers. The Agile process is supported by the HP Agile Manager tool, which enables the project team to track development on a daily basis. At the end of each sprint, the development team conducts a retrospective meeting to determine whether any processes need to be refined. Agile development also enables the team to deliver new releases on time and within budget.

Thanks to the Agile development approach, Youth Welfare is able to provide good service to the people involved and follow up diligently with Flemish youth care.

### About DXC Technology

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