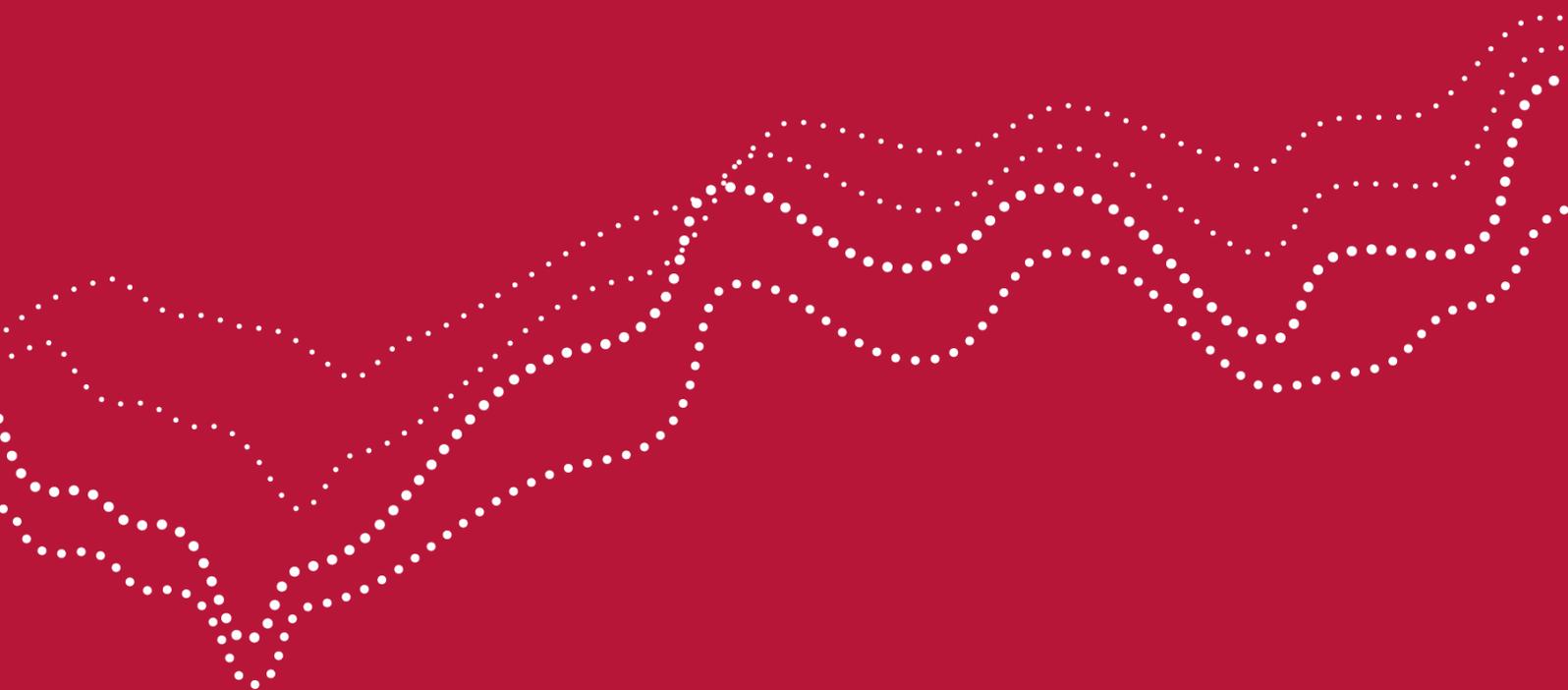


Informing young unemployed people about support measures – does it work?

A survey experiment in Poland

MATEUSZ SMOTER



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ABSTRACT

We conducted a survey experiment in Poland to investigate how providing young people who were not in employment, education, or training (NEET) with information affected their rate of registration with the public employment services. The individuals assigned to the treatment group received information about the services offered by the PES. The information was followed by three text messages (SMS) with links to the PES' contact details and job search engines. We study the causal impact of the provision of information by comparing the rate of registration with the PES of the treated and the untreated NEETs using a post-experimental survey. The percentage of the study participants who registered at PES within the 90 days after the intervention was 17.6% for the treatment group and 19.5% for the control group. The percentage of study participants who returned to education or employment after 90 days from the intervention was 36.0% for the treatment group and 34.8% for the control group. These differences were statistically insignificant.

IMPLEMENTED BY:

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1. Introduction¹

In all EU countries, the public employment services (PES) connect jobseekers with employers by providing them with career counselling, job brokerage services, and access to various active labour market policies (ALMP). The PES often serve as an entrance point to the EU Youth Guarantee (YG) programme, which was launched in 2013 to support the member states in their efforts to combat youth unemployment, especially among those individuals who are not in employment, education, or training (NEET). Since registration with the PES is often a prerequisite for using active measures within the YG scheme, the implementation of the YG programme strongly relies on the ability of the PES to foster connections with NEETs.

However, in many countries, the PES are failing to reach significant segments of this target group. Eurofound (2016) estimated that only around 40% of all NEETs in the EU were registered with a Youth Guarantee provider in 2016. In Poland, less than one-quarter of NEETs use the support provided by the PES. The low registration rate among NEETs is a challenge for public policy, as without PES support, their chances of entering employment decrease.

Unemployed individuals face a variety of information challenges, including difficulties in determining which job search channels to use, which jobs to apply for, and where to turn to for support (Altmann et al., 2018). In light of these challenges, we wanted to investigate whether the low PES registration rate among NEETs is due to their lack of or limited knowledge about the services offered by the PES. The main objective of our study was to investigate the causal impact of providing young people from the NEET group with information about the PES on their probability of using PES support. We developed a survey experiment, and assigned the study participants randomly to treatment and control groups. The treated individuals received information about the services and events available to young unemployed people through the PES. After they were provided with this information, the treated individuals were sent three text messages with links to the PES' contact details, job search engines, and events engines.

We found that providing them with information did not increase the treated individuals' likelihood of using PES support. In addition, we found no statistically significant differences in the treatment effects between the different subpopulations of young unemployed individuals.

The report is structured as follows. Section 2 presents basic information on NEETs and the PES in Poland. Section 3 provides information on the

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experiment design. Section 4 describes the data and the method used. Section 5 presents the results. The last section concludes.

2. NEETs and PES in Poland and the EU

The term NEET (not in employment, education, or training) refers to young people who are not working and are not in the process of improving their professional skills and qualifications by taking part in educational activities or vocational training. In the EU, the NEET indicator is used to describe the labour market situations of young people. According to the Labour Force Survey data, 12% of all young people in Poland were not participating in either the labour market or the education system in 2018 (13% in the EU).

Re-engaging young people in the labour market is a priority of the EU employment strategy. In 2013, the EU introduced the Youth Guarantee programme to counteract unemployment levels among young people, which were growing after the financial and economic crisis of 2007/2008. The member states received considerable financial support to provide all NEETs with either a good quality job offer, education, or training immediately after they became unemployed or left education.

In Poland, like many other EU countries, the public employment services serve as the main entry point to the YG programme. The PES provide jobseekers with access to job brokerage services and various ALMP. Since registration with the PES is often mandatory for individuals who are seeking to take advantage of the active labour market measures within the YG scheme, the implementation of the YG programme strongly relies on the ability of the PES to build connections with young NEETs. However, estimates show that in many countries, the PES are failing to reach significant segments of this target group. Eurofound (2016) estimated that only around 40% of all NEETs in the EU were registered with a Youth Guarantee provider in 2016. In Poland, only around one-quarter of the NEET population are covered by support from these institutions. The registration rate is particularly low among the NEETs who are outside the labour market (Smoter, 2020).

Therefore, the EU urges the member states to develop outreach strategies aimed at identifying and supporting jobless individuals who are outside the PES registers (European Commission, 2018). Re-engaging NEETs in employment or education as early as possible may prevent them from further distancing themselves from the labour market and social welfare institutions; from moving into long-term inactivity; and from slipping out of their routines, and thus becoming less willing to participate in structured activities (OECD, 2016).

In Poland, the PES deliver labour market services at the national, regional, and local levels. The key institutions of the PES are the ministry responsible for labour and social policies, 16 regional PES offices, and 340 local PES offices. The national

government coordinates the regional and local PES offices, and has law-making powers. The regional PES offices draft regional strategies and allocate funds to the local PES offices. The local PES offices work directly with unemployed people, providing job search assistance and implementing active labour market programmes. While the law determines the list of available measures, local PES caseworkers make the final decisions about which measures are granted in consultation with the clients. The regional and local PES offices are under the authority of their respective territorial governments, which have considerable discretion in determining the design and implementation of labour market policies at the regional and local levels.

The low levels of participation in support programmes among NEETs may be attributable to several factors, such as their low trust in public institutions, their lack of self-confidence about handling bureaucratic procedures, their lack of awareness of the available services (Lindert et al., 2020), and other information barriers connected with the job search process (Altmann et al., 2018). In addition, jobless individuals may face other barriers to participation related to the limited geographical reach of the PES (Sztandar-Sztanderska, 2016), or to the stigma associated with being unemployed (Błędowski et al., 2019).

3. RCT Design

Against this background, we wanted to take a closer look at the problem of information barriers, and to analyse whether providing NEETs with information might encourage them to use PES support. We therefore designed a survey experiment to study these issues. We recruited 1500 young NEETs between 18 and 34 years of age from three southern regions in Poland (Małopolskie, Śląskie, and Podkarpackie voivodeships) to participate in a survey conducted via the Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI) survey technique. To take part in the study, respondents could not be in employment, education, or training; could not be registered with the PES, and could not be participating in any employment programme carried out by other institutions. People who were on paid maternity, paternity, or parental leave were considered to be employed, and were therefore excluded from our study sample.

In the first step of the experiment, we collected information about the survey participants' basic sociodemographic characteristics, their reasons for being jobless, the job search activities they had engaged in during the four weeks before the interview, and their availability and willingness to work. Next, the survey participants were randomly assigned to two groups. The experimental group received information about the services provided by the PES, followed by three text messages with the PES' contact details. The control group received no treatment. At this point, the pollsters thanked these individuals for taking part in the study, and ended the survey. The randomization was not stratified.

The pollsters provided the participants of the treatment group with information about the PES, and about the specific services available to them. This information covered several topics intended to meet the needs of various groups of NEETs. First, the pollsters informed the study participants about various ALMP available to young people through the PES (such as on-the-job training, classroom training, subsidies for setting up a business, relocation vouchers, and reimbursement of childcare costs). They were then informed about events periodically organised by the PES that might be of interest to them (e.g., job and educational fairs, and workshops covering topics such as CV preparation, job interview strategies, and business plans). Next, the pollsters provided the participants with contact details for the PES' nationwide website and social media pages (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram). They also advised the participants on how to register with the PES. In the last part of the experiment, the pollsters informed the participants of the number of jobs available through the PES when the survey was conducted, and encouraged them to register with the PES by citing studies showing that working at younger ages increases people's chances of finding a better job and having higher earnings in the future. The pollsters also encouraged the treated individuals to monitor PES events or to look through PES search engines even if they were not available to work, noting that a lack of willingness or availability to work may be a temporary situation, and that being up to date with the local labour market may help them return to the labour market in the future. The pollsters, who are not labour market experts, were instructed to tell the treated individuals to contact the PES directly if they had any additional questions about the services mentioned above.

After taking part in the survey, the treatment group received three text messages sent at five-day intervals: the first message provided the PES' contact details (phone numbers, websites, social media pages); the second message provided a link to the PES' job search engine, which had around 60,000 available jobs when the survey was conducted; and the third message provided a link to a search engine with PES events (e.g., job fairs, educational fairs, workshops). The content of the information and the text messages have been included in the appendix B.

4. Data and method

Table 1 shows the characteristics of the study participants. The sample was gender-balanced: i.e., half of the study participants were female, while the other half were male. Broken down by age group, 27.3% of the participants were in the youngest age group (18-24), 26.2% were in the middle age group (25-29), and 46.5% were in the oldest age group (30-34). Broken down by education level, 64.1% of the study participants had a secondary degree, 18.8% had a primary degree or lower, and 17.1% held a university degree. The respondents came from three southern regions in Poland: Śląskie (38.5%), Małopolskie (37.3%), and Podkarpackie (24.2%). Slightly more than half (52.5%) of the participants were living in a rural area.

In terms of their labour market situations, 60.0% of the respondents could be considered economically inactive (i.e., they were not looking for a job or were not available to start employment at the time of the survey), and 40.0% were unemployed (i.e., they were actively looking for a job and were ready to start employment at the time of the survey). Most of the study participants (58.8%) had previous work experience. The majority of the participants (64.9%) declared a willingness to work at the time of the survey. In slightly more than half of the participants' households (51.7%), at least one child under 15 years of age was present.

Table 1. Summary statistics by treatment status: baseline study

	Sample	Control	Treated	Diff.	St. Err.	t val.	p val.
Men	50.0%	49.5%	50.4%	-0.9%	0.026	-0.30	0.751
Age: 18-24	27.3%	25.6%	28.5%	-2.9%	0.024	-1.20	0.231
Age: 25-29	26.2%	25.8%	26.5%	-0.7%	0.024	-0.30	0.765
Age: 30-34	46.5%	48.6%	45.1%	3.6%	0.026	1.35	0.182
Education: Primary	18.8%	16.0%	20.6%	-4.6%	0.021	-2.25	0.026
Education: Secondary	64.1%	64.9%	63.5%	1.5%	0.026	0.55	0.571
Education: Tertiary	17.1%	19.1%	15.9%	3.2%	0.020	1.60	0.113
Region: Malopolskie	37.3%	38.3%	36.6%	1.7%	0.026	0.65	0.504
Region: Slaskie	38.5%	37.4%	39.2%	-1.8%	0.026	-0.70	0.495
Region: Podkarpackie	24.2%	24.2%	24.2%	0.1%	0.022	0.00	0.985
Urban area	47.5%	45.0%	49.0%	-4.0%	0.026	-1.50	0.131
Unemployed	40.0%	38.3%	41.1%	-2.8%	0.026	-1.05	0.289
Work experience - yes	58.8%	60.8%	57.5%	3.3%	0.026	1.25	0.205
Willing to work - yes	64.9%	64.4%	65.1%	-0.7%	0.026	-0.30	0.779
Child in the hh - yes	51.7%	52.9%	51.0%	1.9%	0.026	0.75	0.464

Note: N=1500; N in control group=582; N in treatment group=918.

Source: own elaboration.

After randomization, we ended up with 582 individuals assigned to the control group and 918 individuals assigned to the treatment group². We performed a mean t-test for several variables to validate that there were no statistically significant differences in the averages between these two groups. Table 1 shows that in most cases, the differences between the control group and the treatment group were

² We forced the computer algorithm to end up with an equal number of study participants in the CG and the TG (750 vs. 750). The discrepancy in the number of study participants in the TG and the CG results from the fact that the survey company responsible for carrying out the survey counted individuals assigned by the computer algorithm to the treatment group who hung out during the information provision as untreated, and recoded them as belonging to the control group (168 individuals). We consider them as treated individuals. Therefore, in our analysis, they are in the TG, in line with their original assignment by the computer.

minor, and were not significant. Only the variable indicating the education level of the respondents was not balanced, as there were 4.6 p.p. more individuals with primary education in the treatment group.

In the baseline study, we recruited 1500 study participants. In the post-trial survey, we contacted 1200 individuals (response rate of around 80%). The attrition rates among the treated and the untreated groups were similar: i.e., we reached 79.6% of the treated individuals and 80.3% of the individuals in the control group. Attrition was not correlated with treatment status (see Table 5 In the appendix A). We also performed another mean t-test for several variables to validate that there were no statistically significant average differences between groups among those individuals who remained in the study. Table 4 In the appendix A shows that attrition did not affect the balance between groups, and that in most cases, the differences between the CG and the TG still were minor and not significant. Only the education level was less balanced, as there were around five p.p. more individuals with primary education in the treatment group, and around five p.p. more individuals with a university degree in the control group. Despite this imbalance in the education levels, we argue that, overall, the groups were well balanced, as the results did not change considerably after controlling for different variables, including the education level.

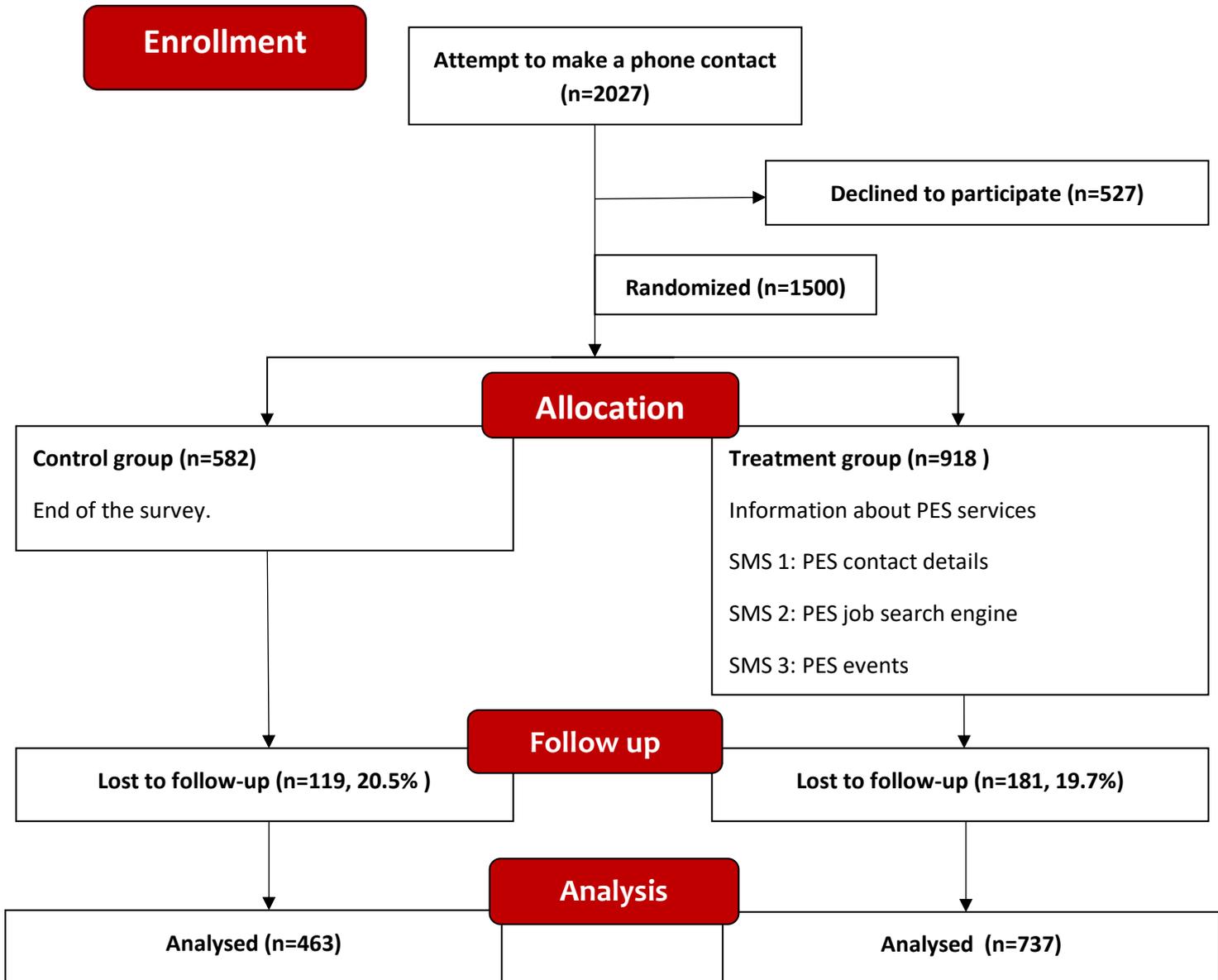
We wanted to analyse whether providing young NEETs with information encouraged them to use PES support. Our first outcome of interest is the percentage of study participants who contacted the PES, registered with the PES, or took part in an employment programme carried out by another labour market institution in the 90 days after the survey. We also wanted to investigate whether information affected return to employment or education of young jobless people. Our second outcome of interest is the percentage of study participants who were in employment or education in the 90 days after the study.

We calculated the Average Treatment Effect (ATE) by measuring the difference in mean outcomes between the treatment and control groups. Additionally, we adjusted for covariates using logistic regression. We estimate a model of the form of:

$$Outcome_i = \beta_0 + \beta_{RCT} D_i + \beta_1 X_i + u_i$$

Where $D_i = 1$ if i is assigned to the treatment group. Control variables (X_i) included: sex, age group, education level, region, place of residence (urban/rural), status on the labour market (unemployed/non-participant), work experience (yes/no), willingness to work (yes/no), presence of a child in the household (yes/no). We further explored the heterogeneity in the treatment effects by running a regression in which we interacted the covariates with the treatment status to see whether there were significant differences in the ATEs among the subgroups.

Scheme 1. RCT Design and the flow diagram



Source: own elaboration based on the CONSORT 2010 Flow Diagram

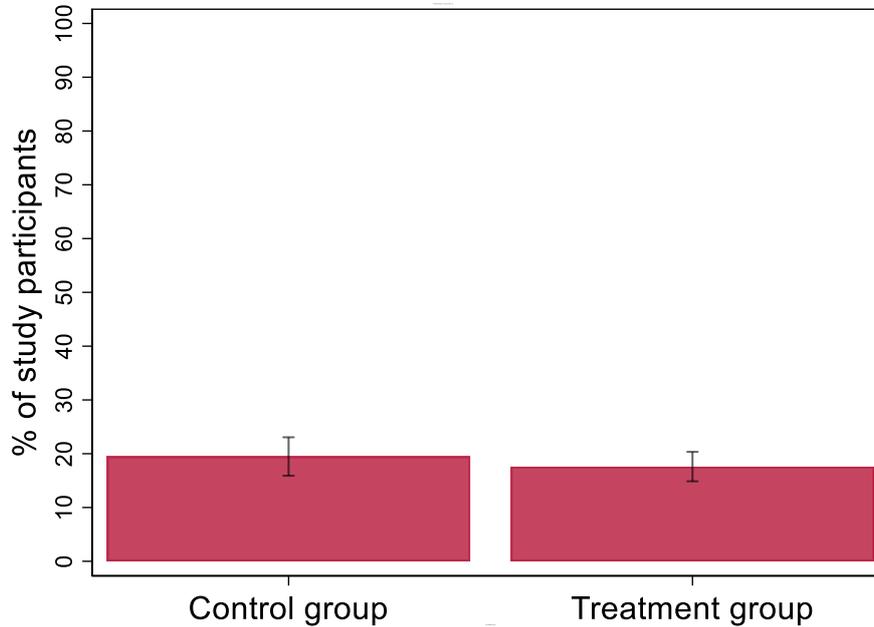
Results

Graph 1 and Graph 2 show the treatment effect of information provision on (a) the probability that the study participant would register with the PES, contact the PES, or take part in an employment programme carried out by another labour market institution in the 90 days after the baseline survey (outcome 1); and (b) the probability that the study participants would return to employment or education in the 90 days after the baseline study (outcome 2).

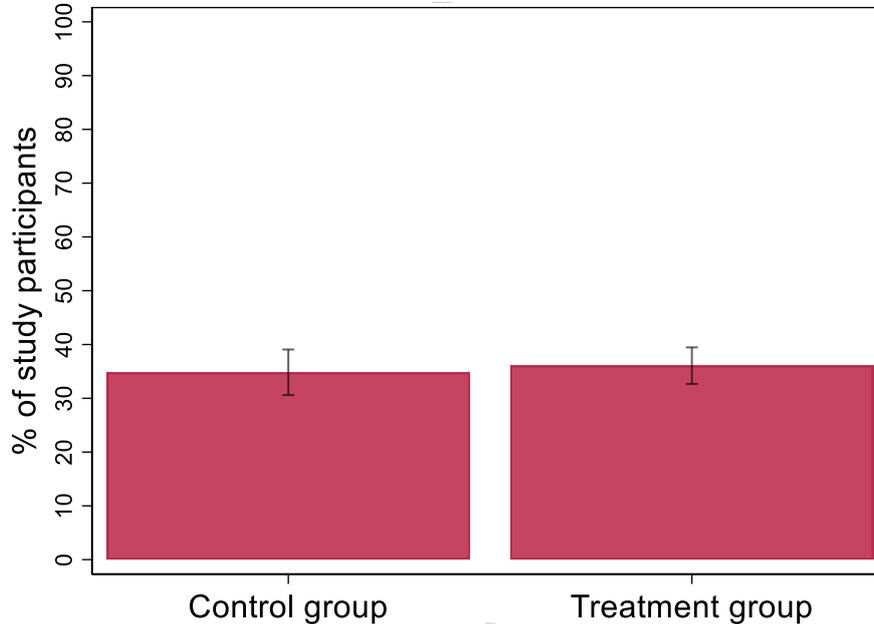
Graph 1 shows that the individuals assigned to the treatment group had 1.9 p.p. lower chances of registering with the PES than the individuals assigned to the control group (the mean for the control group was at the 19.5% level). Graph 2 shows that the individuals assigned to the treatment group had 1.2 p.p. higher chances of returning to employment or education (the mean for the control group was at the 34.8% level). These differences between the control group and the treatment group turned out to be statistically insignificant in both cases.

We also ran a model in which we interacted the treatment status with individuals' gender, place of residence, and labour market status. The results are presented in Table 2 (each column represents one regression). We find no evidence of differential treatment effects by study participants' characteristics.

Graph 1. Treatment effect - registration with the PES (outcome 1)



Graph 2. Treatment effect – return to employment or education (outcome 2)



Note: margins calculated from a model which includes controls for sex, education level, age group, region, place of residence, labour market status, job experience, willingness to work, and presence of a child in the household. We present 95% confidence intervals. The full estimation results are available in the appendix A (Table 6 and Table 7).

Source: own elaboration.

Table 2. Heterogenous treatment effect

Registration with PES (outcome 1)			
	Gender (a)	Place of residence (b)	Labour market status (c)
Treatment	-0.140 (0.206)	0.099 (0.211)	-0.094 (0.197)
Covariate	-0.104 (0.245)	-0.567*** (0.168)	-0.085 (0.316)
Interaction	0.030 (0.311)	-0.493 (0.310)	-0.083 (0.316)
Observations	1200	1200	1200
Pseudo R ²	0.0189	0.0211	0.0190

Return to education or employment (outcome 2)			
	Gender (a)	Place of residence (b)	Labour market status (c)
Treatment	0.120 (0.171)	0.099 (0.187)	-0.001 (0.168)
Covariate	-0.022 (0.204)	-0.291 (0.209)	-0.101 (0.220)
Interaction	-0.144 (0.256)	-0.080 (0.256)	0.133 (0.257)
Observations	1200	1200	1200
Pseudo R ²	0.0354	0.0352	0.0353

Note: each column represent one model. Models displays logit coefficients. Models include controls for sex, education level, age group, region, place of residence, labour market status, job experience, willingness to work, presence of a child in the household. We present 95% confidence intervals.

Source: own elaboration.

To gain better insight into the reasons why some of the individuals in our sample decided not to register with the PES, we investigated these motivations in our survey. The main barrier to registering with the PES cited by the respondents was a lack of time (cited by 28.1% of the treated and 23.9% of the untreated individuals). The second main reason, cited by around 20% of the respondents in both groups, was a lack of interesting offers at the PES. Around 14%-16% of the respondents said they do not meet the formal requirements for registration, which likely means they lack all of the documents needed (e.g., school certificates). Another 12% - 13% of the respondents cited a fear of COVID-19 as an obstacle to registration, while less than 10% of the individuals in each group said that they do not know how to register or that the nearest PES is too far away. The differences between groups were statistically insignificant.

Table 3. Reasons for not registering with the PES

	Treated	Control	Diff.	St. Err.	T val.	P. val
Lack of time	.239	.281	-.042	.029	-1.45	.143
Lack of interesting offers at the PES	.208	.194	.013	.026	0.5	.601
Do not meet formal requirements	.156	.14	.016	.023	0.7	.48
Others	.141	.133	.007	.022	0.3	.752
Fear of COVID-19	.13	.123	.007	.022	0.3	.771
Do not know how to register	.078	.097	-.018	.018	-1	.321
The PES are too far away	.05	.032	.017	.013	1.4	.168

N=1008 (only those respondents who had not registered with the PES).

Source: own elaboration

Summary and conclusion

We carried out a survey experiment to investigate whether providing young jobless people with information about the support offered by the public employment services would encourage them to use this PES support or facilitate their return to employment or education. The individuals assigned to the treatment group received information about the services and events for young jobless people available at the PES, the contact details of the PES, job offers, and PES events.

The percentage of the study participants who contacted the PES, registered with the PES, or took part in an employment programme carried out by another labour market institution within the 90 days after the intervention was 17.6% for the treatment group and 19.5% for the control group. The percentage of study participants who returned to education or employment after 90 days from the intervention was 36.0% for the treatment group and 34.8% for the control group. These differences were statistically insignificant. Moreover, we found no evidence that the treatment affected different individuals differentially.

Due to the non-statistically significant findings, we can not conclude that providing young NEETs with information is not an effective strategy for encouraging them to register with the PES. However, it may also be the case that outreach efforts that are based solely on information provision may not be enough for encouraging young people to use the PES. Other studies suggest that there may be also other reasons other than a lack of knowledge that prevent NEETs from registering with the PES. Therefore, outreach efforts that go beyond information dissemination and focus on finding ways to build trust between the intended population and the service providers; to help people at risk of social exclusion overcome the different barriers they face, including stigma; and to initiate the social change processes for the beneficiaries are also important (Andersson, 2013, Lindert et al., 2020).

Our study has its limitations. First, our results were short term, as we only observed the study participants up to three months after the intervention. The literature suggests that the positive effects of labour market interventions targeted at jobseekers may be substantially delayed (Altmann et al., 2018). Second, the study was carried out during the COVID-19 pandemic, which might have influenced the results. However, at the time of the survey, there were no lockdowns, the PES and other public institutions were operating, ALMPs were available, and job recruitment was taking place. While the COVID-19 pandemic may have affected the overall registration rate, the control and the treatment groups were equally exposed to all of the risks related to the pandemic. Thus, it is unlikely that the pandemic influenced the differences in the treatment effects between the groups. Third, the outcomes were based not on administrative data, but on the subjective responses of the study

participants, which are generally seen as a less reliable source of information about people's employment status.

We suggest three directions for further research in this field. First, researchers may try working with various types of messages to the unemployed, as changes in wording may lead to differences in outcomes. Also, researchers may pay attention to who is providing information, as using more trusted sources (e.g. peers) may be more effective. Second, we suggest investigating the effectiveness of other types of outreach strategies, especially those that involve closer cooperation between outreach teams and potential beneficiaries.

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Appendix A: Figures and Tables

Table 4. Summary statistics by treatment status: post-trial study

	Sample	Control	Treatment	Difference	St Err	t value	p value
Men	46.1%	46.0%	46.2%	-0.2%	0.030	-0.05	0.966
Age group: 18-24	29.2%	28.5%	29.7%	-1.2%	0.027	-0.45	0.655
Age group: 25-29	29.7%	28.5%	30.4%	-1.9%	0.027	-0.70	0.487
Age group: 30-34	41.1%	43.0%	39.9%	3.1%	0.029	1.05	0.290
Education category: Primary	16.4%	13.4%	18.3%	-5.0%	0.022	-2.25	0.025
Education category: Secondary	65.3%	65.6%	65.1%	0.5%	0.028	0.20	0.851
Education category: Tertiary	18.2%	20.9%	16.6%	4.4%	0.023	1.90	0.055
Region: Malopolskie	35.0%	36.0%	34.4%	1.8%	0.029	0.60	0.538
Region: Slaskie	41.4%	40.0%	42.3%	-2.4%	0.029	-0.80	0.416
Region: Podkarpackie	23.6%	24.0%	23.4%	0.7%	0.025	0.25	0.800
Urban area	54.6%	53.3%	55.3%	-2.0%	0.030	-0.70	0.496
Unemployed	43.6%	41.9%	44.7%	-2.8%	0.030	-0.95	0.352
Work experience - yes	58.3%	60.1%	57.1%	2.9%	0.030	1.00	0.319
Willingness to work - yes	67.3%	67.8%	67.0%	0.8%	0.028	0.30	0.776
Child in the household - yes	50.2%	50.6%	49.9%	0.6%	0.030	0.20	0.838

Note: N=1200; N in control group=463; N in treatment group=737.

Source: own elaboration.

Table 5. Missingness

Dependent: missingness
 (0=study participant is observed in the post-trial study, 1=study participant is not observed in the post-trial study)

Treatment group	-0.002 (0.147)
Controls	Yes
Observations	1500
Pseudo R ²	0.183

Note: marginal effects calculated from the logistic regression. Controls include gender, age, education, region, job experience, labour market status, willingness to work, and children in the household. Standard errors are reported in parentheses. Levels of significance: *** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1.

Source: own elaboration

Table 6. Treatment effect - registration with the PES (outcome 1)

	(a)	(b)
Dependent: the study participants who contacted the PES, registered with the PES, or took part in a project carried out by another labour market institution in the 90 days after the baseline study (0=no, 1=yes)		
Treatment group	-0.022 (0.023)	-0.019 (0.023)
Male		-0.013 (0.024)
Age category: 25-29		0.009 (0.033)
Age category: 30-34		-0.006 (0.033)
Education category: Secondary		-0.026 (0.032)
Education category: Tertiary		-0.006 (0.043)
Region: Slaskie		-0.015 (0.025)
Region: Podkarpackie		0.009 (0.031)
Urban areas		-0.084*** (0.025)
Job experience - yes		-0.009 (0.025)
Unemployed		0.018 (0.028)
Willingness to work - yes		-0.036 (0.027)
Child in the household - yes		0.024 (0.025)
Control mean	.197	.195
Observations	1200	1200
Pseudo R ²	.001	.019

Note: marginal effects calculated from the logistic regression. Reference categories: control group, female, age category: 18-24, education category: primary, region: Małopolskie, rural areas, no job experience, economically inactive, no willing to work, no child in the household. Standard errors are reported in parentheses. Levels of significance: *** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1.

Source: own elaboration

Table 7. Treatment effect – return to employment or education (outcome 2)

	(a)	b)
Dependent: the study participants who returned to employment or education in the 90 days after the baseline study (0=no, 1=yes)		
Treatment group	-0.001 (0.028)	0.012 (0.028)
Male		-0.024 (0.029)
Age category: 25-29		-0.070* (0.039)
Age category: 30-34		-0.128*** (0.040)
Education level: Secondary		0.082** (0.035)
Education level: Tertiary		0.249*** (0.050)
Region: Śląskie		-0.126*** (0.032)
Region: Podkarpackie		-0.114*** (0.037)
Urban areas		-0.074** (0.030)
Job experience - yes		0.014 (0.031)
Willingness to work - yes		-0.004 (0.036)
Unemployed		-0.005 (0.034)
Child in the household - yes		0.022 (0.030)
Control mean:	.356	.348
Observations	1200	1200
Pseudo R ²	0.000	0.035

Note: marginal effects calculated from the logistic regression. Reference categories: control group, female, age category: 18-24, education category: primary, region: Małopolskie, rural areas, no job experience, economically inactive, no willing to work, no child in the household. Standard errors are reported in parentheses. Levels of significance: *** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1.

Source: own elaboration

Appendix B: Intervention: information about PES services and text messages

Information provided to individuals assigned to the treatment group

I will present you with brief information about the PES. Please do not hang up and listen until the end. This is the last part of the survey.

I would like to encourage you to register with the PES, even if you are not currently looking for a job. In the PES, you can find many services that will help you find a job, gain new skills, or retrain.

Through the PES you can receive a number of benefits, including:

- paid on-the-job training at a company that you choose yourself;
- up to PLN 30,000 to set up your own business;
- funds for the training, education, or licenses and professional qualifications you choose;
- up to PLN 8000 to move to another city where you expect to find a job;
- reimbursement of childcare costs.

The PES also organise job or educational fairs where you can talk to employers in person. They also organise training on such topics as how to start a company, how to prepare for a job interview, and how to write a good CV. Even if you are not currently looking for a job, it is worth improving your qualifications and checking the available offers regularly. If you change your mind and start looking for a job, it will be easier to find one.

If you want more information about the PES, please visit their website www.zielonalinia.gov.pl or their Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram pages where you can talk to PES caseworkers by phone, chat, or Messenger.

After the survey, I will send you the PES' contact details via SMS.

You can register with the PES online without leaving your home.

Please keep in mind that contacting the PES increases your chances of finding services that are suitable for you, especially now, when EU funds are still available. Research shows that working at younger ages increases people's chances of finding better jobs and having higher earnings in the future. There are over 60,000 vacancies in the PES' databases throughout the country. Last year, many young people who registered with the PES found a job.

Once again, I encourage you to Google the services offered by the PES.

Thank you for participating in the survey. We will call you with a few questions in about a month. We will also send you three text messages. They will contain the PES' contact details, a link to job offers, and a link to internships and training courses offered by the PES.

I hope this information encouraged you to contact the PES.

Text messages provided to individuals assigned to the treatment group

Text message No. 1

Check the PES services: website, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, phone 19524, mail: kontakt@zielonalinia.gov.pl - you can talk to PES caseworkers by phone, chat, or Messenger.

Text message No. 2

Check job offers, on-the-job training and classroom training available at the PES: link. You will find about 60 000 job offers there.

Text message No. 3

Check out the events organised by the PES - job fairs, training, etc .: link



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