Combined Econometric and Self-Assessment Motivational Profiling of Jobseekers

UNEMPLOYED CUSTOMERS RECEIVE A COOPERATION STRATEGY AND AN OFFER OF SERVICES BASED ON THEIR SKILLS, RISK FACTORS OF UNEMPLOYMENT, AND MOTIVATION TO SEARCH FOR A JOB.

LATVIA

In the context of limited staff resources, it was necessary to identify an appropriate strategy for targeted individual work with the client, and to match the client with appropriate services to facilitate return to employment. Profiling appeared to meet this challenge by reducing the risk that unemployment spells are increased by 'locking' the jobseeker into inappropriate measures and/or repeating this failure by attempting several measures with individual jobseekers.

One challenge was ensuring that staff in all local offices treat their customers in a similar way, as there was a risk of receiving different offers of services depending on the local office or case officer. Customers who belong to the same profiling group should also ideally receive similar offers of services.

Linking profiling with ALMP measures can increase transparency and accountability for the use of the funds allocated to ALMP measures, as this may help to avoid long and costly support measures being offered to jobseekers who already have a high probability of finding a job.

Name of the PES	State Employment Agency of Latvia (SEA)
When was the practice implemented?	An econometric profiling system was developed and implemented in 2013. From May 2013 to November 2013, the profiling method was developed (electronic design, testing and training of staff) and a user handbook was written. From 1 November 2013, the method was extended to all local employment offices. The system needed regular (annual) revision and updating of the statistics/econometrics on which a 'decision tree' is based. Evaluation of the profiling method in 2017 provided the necessity for improvement, so that in 2018 the main risk factors of unemployment were figured out and extended to opportunities to find a job. The pilot project for the new practice started in June 2019 and statistical analysis of data scores and evaluation of results will be done at the end of 2020.
What were the practice's main objectives?	To develop a profiling method allowing to determine the client's likelihood of finding a job and main obstacles, and also to choose the strategy for cooperation. The method assists Latvian PES (SEA) counsellors to determine a set of most appropriate active labour market policy measures.

What activities were carried out?	In the pilot project, the profiling method allows staff to classify jobseekers in three different groups depending on their probability of finding a job (low, medium, high) according to the risk factors of unemployment, whereas the results of the self-assessment of skills and motivation are used to understand a strategy to cooperate with customers. The profiling process comprises a combination of data from self-assessment of the client (done in close collaboration with the client and Latvian PES counsellor in the first meeting) and the likelihood of finding a job based on risk factors of unemployment. ▶ The PES counsellor assesses the risk factors of unemployment determining the client's likelihood of finding a job. ▶ The PES counsellor conducts a motivational interview with a client in order to assess the client's motivation to cooperate with PES, the client's motivation to search for a job and the client's self-assessment of their skills. The interview is based on 12 predefined questions. ▶ This determines which profile group the particular client belongs to (low, medium or high likelihood of finding a job). In addition, the client's motivation to cooperate with PES, motivation to search for a job and self-assessment of skills help the counsellor to choose the cooperation strategy. ▶ For each profile group, a set of most appropriate active labour market measures is defined. ▶ PES counsellors use the results of profiling for individual and tailored work with the client to develop an individual action plan.
What outcomes/results have been achieved?	In 2017, the evaluation of the profiling system showed that we should provide ALMPs closely linked to individual situations and risk factors of unemployment. The pilot project started on 1 June 2019, and obtained data of profiled unemployed persons from June to August 2019 will be used in statistical analysis. An evaluation of the pilot project is planned at the end of 2020. The main expected impact from the pilot project concerns improved profiling methods and an evidence-based tool to help clients return to the labour market.
What are the lessons learnt and success factors?	Main success factors: ▶ focus on risk factors of unemployment; ▶ probability of finding a job linked to the client's risk factors and the client's self-assessment linked to the strategy of cooperation; ▶ involvement of the PES staff in the interpretation of the results of the profiling and use of results in their individual work with the client. Lessons learnt: ▶ Demographic data is insufficient for individual comparison; therefore, the previous econometric model did not support the personal (individual) factors which need to be taken in account to provide an individual approach to a client; ▶ The pilot project is focusing more on personal risk factors to assess client's probability in finding a job.

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